

# LONDON SOCIETY.

NOVEMBER, 1885.

## THE OLD TRANSPONTINE DRAMA.

IN days gone by, and not very far gone by, the line that divided the West End theatres from the East End and Transpontine was almost impassable to the actor, though now and again the same authors, as Fitzball and Douglas Jerrold, wrote for the audiences on both sides the water; those times are past, and the four quarters of theatrical London live in brotherly love, or at least in a spirit of commercial fraternity, with interchange of pieces and interchange of actors. Thus the transpontine drama has now almost ceased to possess a distinct individuality, and is very little if at all different to that produced at Drury Lane or the Adelphi.

The first place of theatrical or equestrian entertainment opened on the Surrey side was Astley's Amphitheatre. In 1770 one Philip Astley, formerly a trooper, who had greatly distinguished himself in action and who had always a great fancy for breaking in and training horses, took upon lease a piece of waste ground near the foot of Westminster Bridge, and opened what he called a riding school, though it was really a circus; there was a ring in the centre open to the sky, and seats all round ranged under a canvas roof; the prices of admission were 3*d.* and 6*d.* At first he performed without a licence, and proceedings were instituted against him by the Surrey magistrates. One day, however, the King happened to be passing over Westminster Bridge upon a horse that proved unmanageable; Astley, who was looking on, came forward to His Majesty's assistance and soon rendered the beast docile, for which service he was a few days afterwards rewarded with a licence in due form. In 1780 he erected a roofed-in wooden building, with gallery, pit, and boxes, out of the old Covent Garden hustings, which had just been used for an election; this *débris* were the perquisite of anybody who chose to remove them, and were usually made into a bonfire by the mob to celebrate the return of the successful candidate. Astley offered gin and beer to those who would bring him this wood instead of burning it, and therewith built his new Amphitheatre. The interior being decorated so as to resemble an avenue of trees, it was called "the Royal Grove." The prices ranged from 2*s.* to 6*d.* The entertainments consisted of performing dogs, tumbling, and feats of horsemanship. In 1787 he

added burlettas and pantomime. Seven years later the building was burned to the ground; in less than seven months a new one rose in its place. In 1803 this was also destroyed by fire. Without losing a day the sturdy old trooper set about raising a successor. Morning and night, in snow and rain, and drilling his workmen as though they were a troop of soldiers, he personally superintended the work until all was completed. The new house opened on Easter Monday, 1804, with, for the first time, an equestrian spectacle, though, as we shall presently see, he was not the originator of this kind of dramatic exhibition, for which the house was thereafter to be famous.

Philip Astley was an indefatigable worker himself and expected everybody about him to be the same. Difficulties and shortness of time never entered into his calculations. "Come, boys," he would say late in the week, "we must have a new piece out on Monday." Perhaps the master carpenter would grumble and say it was impossible. "Who's Mr. Impossible?" Astley would retort, "I don't know him, he don't live in this house, and he never shall." Carrying his old military habits into circus life he was a terrible martinet; his companies, as may be supposed, were not the cream of the profession, and required a tight hand; indeed it was said that he occasionally applied the whip to his two-legged as well as to his four-legged performers. "Why don't you serve your actors as I do mine," he said to Harris, of Covent Garden, one day; "never let 'em have anything to eat till they've done acting."

He was not less severe on "the poet" whom he kept to write pieces at a couple of guineas each, and who could be kept sober only by that modest stipend being doled out to him in shillings. After having erected in France, Great Britain, and Ireland no fewer than nineteen amphitheatres Astley died in 1814. He was succeeded by his son, who had been for some years the actual manager. Young Astley was a famous rider and created such an impression in Paris that Marie Antoinette presented him with a gold medal incrustated with diamonds, and gave him the name of the English Rose, a very high honour, as it placed him beside the greatest of male dancers, Vestris, who was called the French Rose. In 1817 he relinquished his government in favour of Davis, who had been in partnership with him since 1804, and the theatre was rechristened "Davis's Amphitheatre." Under this management the equestrian spectacles became more magnificent than ever. One bearing the tremendous title of "the Blood Red Knight" brought in £18,000 to the treasury; "The Battle of Waterloo" and "the Burning of Moscow," in which an actor named Gomersal—the one whom Colonel Newcome was so struck with—made an immense sensation by his portraiture of Napoleon, and drew all London.

To Davis succeeded the famous Andrew Ducrow, perhaps the greatest rider that was ever seen upon the equestrian stage, as

well as the most perfect of pantomimists. He was noted for a profound contempt for the literary part of the drama. "Cut the dialect (dialogue) and come to the 'osses," was his favourite direction. During the rehearsal of an equestrian piece one morning, after listening with growing impatience to a long dialogue between the two leading actors, he at last broke in with:

"Hold hard, gentlemen; here's a deal o' cackle without any good in it. I'll show you how to cut it. You say 'Yield thee, Englishman?' then you," indicating the other, "answer 'Never!' then you say 'Obstinate Englishman, you die.' Then you both fights. There, that settles the matter; the audience will understand you a deal better, and the poor 'osses won't catch cold while you're jawing."

He gave Bunn a description of the close of one of his seasons after the following manner: "I don't know how you find it, but as soon as I put up the last nights of the season, the beggars begin to give themselves airs. I went to the theatre the other night, and seeing a prime little roasting pig on a nice white napkin in the hall, I told some one to take it upstairs to Mrs. Ducrow. The fellow said it wasn't for me, but for Mr. Roberts. He's the chap, you know, as orders the corn for the 'osses; I'm only the chap as pays for it. Then them confounded carpenters sneak in of a morning with their hands in their pockets, doubled up as though they'd got the cramp, and at night they march out as upright as a dart. 'Cos why? every one of 'em's got a deal plank up his back. Then the supers, every one on 'em, takes out a lump o' coal in his hat, and they all club their priggings together and sell the lot for drink. As to the riders, they come into rehearsal gallows grand, 'cos they've had all the season a precious deal better salary than they're worth; and at night they come in gallows drunk and, forgetting they may want an engagement next year, are as cheeky as a bit of Billingsgate." Although so illiterate that he seldom ventured upon a speaking part, however small, his taste and talent as a stage manager in contrasting colours and arranging groups were unrivalled. Nor was his reputation confined to the Westminster Amphitheatre, it was world famous. In Paris, while performing at Franconi's, the Duchesse d'Angoulême presented him with a gold medal; after the run of one of his pageants at Drury Lane, "St. George and the Dragon," Queen Adelaide presented him with a hundred pounds, and Count D'Orsay with a pair of gilt pistols and a dirk mounted in ivory and gold. In 1841 the Amphitheatre was again destroyed by fire, and his losses, amounting to £20,000, so preyed upon Ducrow's mind as to cause his death a few months afterwards.

The house was rebuilt by Batty, who catered for the public after the manner of his predecessors. To him succeeded Cooke, who signalized his management by producing an equestrian version of "Richard III." in which White Surrey was the principal

character, his death scene being given a much greater importance than that of his royal master; "Macbeth"—what was the Thane of Cawdor's favourite steed?—and "Henry IV." following upon similar lines. Dion Boucicault, in 1863, converted the Amphitheatre into the Theatre Royal, Westminster. But the regular drama would not pay in the old equestrian temple, which went back to its old ways. Here, in 1864, Ada Isaac Menken took the town by storm, by the beauty of her form and her daring riding as Mazeppa. In 1873 Mr. George Sanger, the present lessee, undertook the management.

The drama of Astley's Amphitheatre was and is *sui generis*, and of no other; its most salient features are noise, blood, thunder, gunpowder, tyrant kings, chiefs of the most ferocious type of theatrical humanity, and heroes of the most impossible bravery and virtue. A good war is as profitable to the management as it is to Woolwich or Portsmouth; every great battle from Waterloo to Kassassin has probably been at some time depicted upon that stage. "Astley's" is immortalized in Dickens' "Old Curiosity Shop" and Thackeray's "Newcomes;" it has always been the delight of children, and we have all remembrances of that curiously mixed odour of gas, sawdust and orange-peel that used to salute our nostrils upon entering, and which, from association of ideas, was so delightful to our juvenile noses. A collection of the plays produced at this theatre would be curious reading; if brevity be the soul of wit, their dialogue would certainly be the wittiest ever written, while their stage directions would be the most diffuse. A few of these wonderful dramas are mummified in Cumberland's and Duncombe's "Minor Theatre," but the greater number were jealously guarded in manuscript.

The Surrey commenced its existence as an amphitheatre. In 1771 a famous equestrian performer and "strong man" named Charles Hughes opened a riding school and exhibition in opposition to Astley's, in Stangate. Twelve years later he and Charles Dibdin, the song writer, entered into a partnership and raised a building which cost £15,000, near the Obelisk in Blackfriars Road. It was opened in 1782 under the name of the Royal Circus. Let Dibdin speak for himself as to the plan of the undertaking.

"Horsemanship," he says, in his "Professional Life," "was at that time very much admired, and I conceived that if I could divest it of its blackguardism it might be made an object of public consequence; I proposed, therefore, that it should embrace all the dexterity and reputation of ancient chivalry; that tournaments, running at the ring, and other feats of equestrian celebrity, should be performed. I proposed to have a stage, on which might be represented spectacles, each to terminate with a joust or tilting match, or some other grand object, so managed as to form a novel and striking *coup de théâtre*, and that the business of the stage and ring might be united."



This was the origin of the equestrian drama, which was afterwards transferred to Astley's. At first children were the only performers, the idea being to make the Royal Circus a school for actors; they were sixty in number, and among them were several destined thereafter to make some figure in the theatrical world, notably the future Mrs. Charles Kemble, Mrs. Bland, Mrs. Mountain, etc. Grimaldi, the grandfather of Joey, was engaged as ballet master, and the speculation promised every success, when lo, the Surrey magistrates suddenly swooped down, and closed it as an unlicensed building, but not without such resistance on the part of the audience that the Riot Act had to be read and the military called out. The next year, however, the licence being obtained, the house was re-opened. The ground landlord, Colonel West, who was the principal proprietor, dying soon afterwards, the other partners fell by the ears. Dibdin was put into the King's Bench by his creditors and renounced by his treacherous partners. The management of the Royal Circus was a crown of thorns; constant breaches of the law were continually involving the managers in prosecutions; one Justice Hyde was their determined enemy, and at the head of a posse of constables would make raids upon the theatre and arrest the offending parties. On one occasion, after arresting a partner named Barrat, he carried him off to a neighbouring public house and there opened a commission, the result of which was that the unfortunate actor was committed to Bridewell. The whole of the proceedings forms a curious and suggestive picture of the times.

The property ultimately fell into the hands of Colonel West's widow. Astley had introduced performing dogs at his amphitheatre, but only in such tricks as are now to be seen in the concert halls; the Royal Circus seems to have been the first place in which the dog appeared as an actor, in a play written expressly to display his peculiar talents. The Roscii of the canine stage, two in number, were called Geler and Victor, and such was their popularity that they held daily receptions and people flocked in hundreds to gaze upon and fondle these canine phenomena. Dog pieces became quite the rage, they even invaded the classic stage of Drury Lane, and one saved Sheridan from bankruptcy, when Kemble, Siddons and a magnificent company of two-legged players had been performing to empty benches. The actors who owned the animals were called "dog stars." They always travelled in pairs; one played the villain, the other the virtuous individual: the latter was always attended by his faithful "dawg" who protected him from all the machinations of his enemy, the villain of the drama. At the wind up the latter took "the seize" as it was called, that is to say, at a given signal the dog sprang at his throat, which was guarded by a thick pad, invisible, of course, to the audience, covered with red cloth; after turning round like a tetotum, and shouting "mussy, mussy"—they invariably so pronounced the

word—he would fall and roll about in great agony upon the stage, the dog still keeping a tight hold, until he was supposed to be dead. Shakespeare's plays in their time have been made to assume many curious forms, but "Hamlet" as a dog piece is the most startling of all, yet this was actually achieved by one of these "dog stars" about five and twenty years ago in the provinces. He announced himself as "the only dog Hamlet," which he probably was, though the phrase, from a natural history point of view, was a little mixed. The play was very much abbreviated of course, the Prince of Denmark in every scene was attended by a large black dog, and in the last, the sagacious animal took upon himself the office of executioner by springing upon the king and putting an end to his wicked career in the usual orthodox (dog) fashion.

In 1803 the Royal Circus incurred the doom which seems sooner or later to overtake all such places: it was burned down. Rebuilt, it was opened in the following year with the usual style of entertainment. In 1809 it came under the management of the celebrated actor, Elliston, at a rental of £2,200 per annum. He converted the arena into a pit and the stables into saloons. The opening bill was an extraordinary one; the performance commenced with a drama entitled "Albert and Adela, or the Invisible Avengers," and "Macbeth" converted into a *ballet d'action*, in which the lessee took the leading part. This was not so ridiculous as it sounds; it was a mere evasion of the law which at that time prohibited the performance of the legitimate drama at any but the patent theatre; no doubt enormous liberties were taken with Shakespeare's text; the "Beaux' Stratagem," "Hamlet" and many others were similarly twisted into a form their authors never dreamt of.

In 1810 the Royal Circus was the scene of one of those theatrical riots, fomented by rival performers, that were comparatively common until within the last sixty or seventy years. The rivals on this occasion were two dancers, a Miss Giroux and a Miss Taylor; the first, who seems to have been an established favourite of the house, considered herself aggrieved by the engagement of the latter; the quarrel soon spread outside the theatre, where partisans nightly assembled to groan and hiss or shout and applaud as each favourite made her appearance. It was in vain that Elliston appealed to them; the moment he appeared both parties united to howl and pelt him off the stage. Night after night these disturbances went on. Two neighbouring taverns changed their signs to "the Giroux" and "the Taylor," and became the rallying points of the two factions, and the scenes at times of desperate battles; crowds hung round the stage entrance nightly to cheer and hiss the ladies as they entered. A song was written called "The Rival Queens," which was daily sung at the Obelisk in Blackfriars Road, and many people, in imitation of the O. P. riots at Covent Garden, went about with the letter G. or T. in their hats. As the house was

always crammed, Elliston after the first night or two did not trouble his head much about the matter, but let the contending parties fight it out to their hearts' content, until the authorities threatened to interfere; then he put forth a notice, in his usual grandiloquent style, that on a certain night he would himself adjudge the cause. After the first piece a chair of state from the theatrical property room was brought before the footlights, and in this the great manager seated himself to deliver this new judgment of Paris. But, so far from having his decision accepted by the audience, he had to beat an undignified retreat from their wrath. The affair was now carried into the law courts; the ring-leaders, who were responsible people, were convicted of riot and mulcted in heavy penalties; but although his property had sustained considerable damage, Elliston magnanimously refused to receive any compensation, and the fines were handed over to a charity.

He retired from the management in 1814, and was succeeded by Dunn, Heywood and Branscombe, who once more resumed the circus performances. The new managers soon came to grief and were followed in 1816 by Tom Dibdin, who after making considerable alterations, reopened the theatre as "the Surrey." Under his directorship a better style of piece was performed; versions of Scott's novels were the order of the day, and Milman's "Fazio" first saw the footlights upon this stage; bankruptcy, however, was the result of all his efforts. After this the house changed managers every few months in consequence of the exorbitant rental. Pieces of the most degraded description were produced, notably one upon the murder of Weare by Thurtell, in which the identical gig used by the murderers was brought upon the stage. But all the speculations came to grief.

In the interim Elliston had become lessee of Drury Lane, which after seven years landed him in the Bankruptcy Court. In 1827 the Surrey being vacant he again undertook the management, and by one of those accidents which frequently accomplish more than all the talent, foresight, and industry in the world, it proved, this time, a most prosperous speculation. Douglas Jerrold, then a young man, was writing dramas for Davidge of the Cobourg for five pounds a week. One day he and his task-master quarrelled, and instead of delivering over the MS. he had in his pocket he carried it to Elliston, who immediately accepted it. The piece was "Black Eyed Susan." T. P. Cooke, already a famous actor, was engaged for William at the then enormous salary of £60 a week, and a half clear benefit every sixth week. The first performance was on January 26, 1829. The success of the piece was not marked on the first night until it came to the catastrophe, but the curtain fell upon a whirlwind of applause, and with each succeeding performance the success increased.

"All London," wrote Hepworth Dixon in the *Athenæum*, at the time of Jerrold's death, "went over the water, and Cooke

became a personage in society, as Garrick had been in the days of Goodman Fields. Covent Garden borrowed the play and engaged the actor for an after-piece. A hackney cab carried the triumphant William in his blue jacket and white trousers from the Obelisk to Bow Street, and Mayfair maidens wept over the stirring situations and laughed over the searching dialogue, which had moved an hour before the laughter and tears of the Borough. On the three hundredth night of representation the walls of the theatre were illuminated and vast multitudes filled the thoroughfares. When subsequently produced at Drury Lane it kept off ruin for a time even from magnificent misfortune. Actors and managers for a time reaped a golden harvest. Testimonials were got up for Elliston and Cooke on the glory of its success, but Jerrold's share of the gain was slight—about £70 of the many thousands it realized for the management. With unapproachable meanness Elliston abstained from presenting the youthful writer with the value of a toothpick. When the drama had run three hundred nights he said to Jerrold with amusing coolness, 'My dear boy, why don't you get your friends to present you with a bit of plate?' For the four hundred nights 'Black Eyed Susan' was played at different theatres during the first year, Jerrold received about the sum that Cooke was paid for six nights at Covent Garden."

Jerrold wrote several other pieces for this house; among others a five-act blank verse tragedy called "Thomas A'Becket," which were some manager to revive it would be found to be a far better stage play than the Laureate's. From the production of the famous nautical drama fortune never deserted Robert William Elliston. He died manager of the Surrey Theatre. His last appearance was upon that stage in the June of 1831, in the character of Sheva in Cumberland's "Jew," upon which occasion "Black Eyed Susan" was played as an after-piece for the two hundred and twentieth time.

At the end of the performance he made a speech—he was nothing if not a speech-maker—in which he humorously supposed himself to be the descendant of an old actor, one Mr. Elliston, who had for many years enjoyed the public favour, but who a few weeks before had judiciously

"Walk'd sober off, before a sprightlier age  
Came tittering on, to thrust him from the stage."

Twelve days afterwards he had passed for ever from this earthly stage. Who has not read Lamb's delightful essay upon this eccentric genius? The anecdotes told of him are inexhaustible. "How is it," remarked some one to Jerrold, one day, "I can see a duke or a prime minister any morning, but I can never see Mr. Elliston?" "There's one comfort," answered Douglas, "if he's invisible in the morning he'll do the handsome thing any afternoon by seeing you twice, for at that time of day he always sees double."

Nothing, however, will convey so complete an idea of the man as those speeches which he never missed an occasion of addressing to the audience. I cannot forbear quoting one delivered to a noisy gallery, which, in its grandiloquent commencement and intensely common-place termination, is exquisitely comic.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I venture as a most unobtrusive individual to take the great liberty of addressing you. It is of rare occurrence that I deem it necessary to place myself in juxtaposition with you. (*Noise in the gallery.*) When I said juxtaposition, I meant *vis-à-vis*. (*Increased noise.*) When I uttered the word *vis-à-vis* I meant contactability. Now let me tell you that *vis-à-vis*, which is a French term, and contactability, which is a truly English term, very nearly assimilate to each other. (*Disturbance redoubled.*) Gentlemen, gentlemen, I am really ashamed of your conduct. It is unlike a Surrey audience. Are you aware that I have in this establishment most efficient peace officers at my immediate disposal? Peace officers, gentlemen, mean persons necessary in time of war. A word to the wise. One word more—if that gentleman in the carpenter's cap will sit down (*pointing to pit*) the little girl in red ribbons behind him—you, my love, I mean—will be able to see the entertainment."

After Elliston's death the Surrey was taken by Osbaldistone, under whose management the next great success, after "Black Eyed Susan," was made by a play written by Fitzball upon the well-known story of Jonathan Bradford; the peculiarity of this drama was that in one scene the stage was divided into four compartments, and four actions were carried on simultaneously. Such an effect had never before been attempted; Fitzball says that when he read the piece the actors looked aghast at the audacity of the idea, and could not conceive how it was to be carried out. Carried out it was, however. "Jonathan Bradford" proved to be one of the sensations of the year; it ran two hundred and sixty-four nights and brought eighty thousand pounds to the treasury. It is as difficult to understand the success of this production as it will be to our grandchildren to understand that of many an one of the present day. "Jonathan Bradford" is a good specimen of the Surrey drama of the time; it is partly written in such blank verse as the following. The innkeeper Bradford having just returned from market thus addresses his wife:

"Give me a kiss, wife; another!  
The wine is good that smacks upon the lip.  
How are the bantlings?"

*Ans.* "Well, and both a-bed."  
*Brad.* "I've brought the lemons and the nutmegs,  
The sugar and the comfits for the children."

"I have rare news beside,  
The Parliament hath ta'en the tax off wine and spirits;  
That's profitable to me.  
Besides, the labouring classes will have more comforts,  
And that's what ought to be in a free country."

This play is an instance of the fallibility of managerial judgment; Osbaldistone was so dissatisfied on first reading it that it was only produced because nothing else was ready.

After Osbaldistone Davidge mounted the Surrey Theatre. Bunn of Drury Lane and Miss Romer the singer followed. The next notable management was that of Shepherd and Creswick, under whose *régime* the nautical drama reigned supreme, with an occasional dash of the legitimate. Jerrold's William was the progenitor of a wonderful race of stage sailors, who were equal to any half-dozen land-lubbers either with fists or swords, and could knock a man down with a quid of tobacco. Who does not remember those extraordinary combats in which the virtuous soldier fought with a sword in each hand, and when he was disarmed by overwhelming numbers, always had an unlimited supply of gigantic pistols in his belt to take their place? It is but justice, however, to add that this phenominal individual, who never uttered a thought or gave a name to anybody or anything except in nautical phraseology, bore more resemblance to Fitzball's Jack Junk in "The Floating Beacon," which preceded "Black Eyed Susan" by four years, than to Jerrold's hero; but it was the latter that created the appetite for sailor pieces.

The old Surrey was burned down in 1865. The new theatre is said to have cost £38,000, and was opened by the former managers. Between their retirement and the commencement of the management of Conquest and Merrit, several tried their fortunes here with varied success. During the present season Mr. George Conquest has become the sole lessee.

Although the Victoria Theatre is a thing of the past, no account of the transpontine drama, however cursory, would be complete without some reference to this once famous place of amusement. During its latter years "the Vic.," as it was familiarly called, was patronized only by the lowest audience in London, such an audience as would scarcely be found now-a-days in the worst concert hall. On warm nights the gentlemen in the boxes usually divested themselves of their coats and sat in their shirt sleeves, making up at frequent intervals for the rapid evaporation occasioned by the heat, by copious draughts from black bottles, which they passed on to their ladies, who unceasingly munched oranges, apples and sandwiches. As to the pit and gallery, they were almost indescribable; it was not an infrequent occurrence in the middle of the performance for a policeman to come in search of somebody that was wanted, and carry him off there and then; showers of orange peel, and occasionally a ginger-beer bottle, were hurled upon the occupants of pit and boxes, and between the acts amenities of a very strong description were exchanged between the ladies and gents of all parts of the house.

Yet the Cobourg arose under royal patronage; it was built by subscription, and the Princess of Wales and her husband



headed the list with their names. The proprietors of the Surrey having proposed to raise the rent of their tenants, Messrs. Asted, Jones and Dunn, to the exorbitant sum of £4,200 per annum, those gentlemen threw up the lease, removed all their property, and determined to erect a new theatre in the immediate neighbourhood. The site chosen was the western side of one of the great ditches that drained Lambeth Marsh, a great portion of which was at the time still open fields; the foundations were made of the stones of the old Savoy Palace, then just being pulled down for the opening of Lancaster Place. The first stone was laid for the prince by proxy in October, 1816. But in spite of royal patronage, the money did not come in to keep pace with the work, and the Cobourg might never have been finished had not a wealthy tallow-chandler, named Glossop, with a passion for the drama, advanced a considerable sum, with the aid of which it was completed at a cost of about £12,000, and opened in the May of 1818. The play was "Trial by Battle; or, Heaven Defend the Right." It was founded on the *cause célèbre* of the murder of Mary Ashford; in which the accused, one Abraham Thornton, appealing to an old, forgotten statute, claimed "the wager by battle" against his accuser, the brother of the deceased, declared himself ready to defend his plea of not guilty with his body, and threw down a gauntlet, after the manner of a knight errant. The challenge was not taken up, the prisoner was discharged, and the crime has remained an undiscovered mystery to this day. This extraordinary case had been decided only a week or two before the opening of the theatre.

In addition to the drama there was "a grand Asiatic ballet," and a harlequinade arranged from the "Masque of Comus." The newspapers of the day inform us that "a large and fashionable audience" were present on the first night; and the play-bills state that it was the intention of the proprietor "to have all the avenues to the theatre well lighted, while the appointment of additional patrols on the Bridge Road, and keeping them in their own pay, will afford ample security to the patrons of the theatre." But fashionable audiences did not long continue to visit the Cobourg, which very soon became the resort only of the aborigines. "It is the very haunt and refuge of the melo-dramatic muse," writes a critic, during its earlier years; "there 'murder bares her red arm' with most appalling vividness; there the genius of robbery reigns triumphant on his festive throne; there the sheeted ghosts do squeak and gibber across the frightened stage, and all the sublimities of horror are to be found there, in their most high and palmy state."

According to the lights of the time it was considered a very handsome theatre, and the looking-glass curtain, which was invented in 1822 and used for several years as an act-drop, was regarded as one of the sights of London. It was thirty-six feet

high, thirty-two wide, composed of sixty-three divisions and inclosed in a gilt frame, and was raised bodily much in the same fashion as the iron curtain now at the Prince's. It was ultimately done away with as its enormous weight was said to endanger the roof. Pieces were excellently mounted—for those days—the scenery was well painted, indeed, Clarkson Stanfield was at one time among the scenic artists, and the acting of its kind was good. Miss Vincent, thirty or forty years ago, was as famous a heroine of domestic drama on the south side of the Thames as Mrs. Stirling on the north, and allowing for difference of style their abilities were probably about equal. Old Surrey-side playgoers still talk of her acting in "Susan Hopley," a version of Mrs. Crowe's once famous novel, that for hundreds of nights drowned the theatre with tears. N. T. Hicks, "brayvo Hicks," as he was called, Bengough, Watkins Burroughs, Osbaldistone, Henry Wallack, Henry Kemble and many others, of whom all figured in those famous pictures known as penny plain and twopence coloured, in their favourite parts, with legs wide apart and sword or pistol in hand, and a large reserve in their belts.

As we have already seen, one of the early writers for this theatre was Douglas Jerrold, and he never forgave the manager Davidge for the grinding drudgery he imposed upon him. "May he keep his carriage and not be able to ride in it!" he exclaimed bitterly. And the wish was fulfilled to the letter. Davidge was worth about £16,000, but his health was so bad that he had no enjoyment of his money. He died early in the evening; upon hearing of the event Jerrold remarked, "Well, I didn't think he'd die before the half price came in." All Jerrold's first essays in dramatic composition were produced at this house.

Fitzball, the inexhaustible, also contributed largely to the repertory. West End stars occasionally crossed the river; Edmund Kean acted here two nights and received a hundred pounds for his services. Paganini played here one night. Buckstone made his first London appearance upon these boards, and many other distinguished actors at different times trod them. But none were so successful as local favourites; the Lambethites preferred Tom Cobham, a famous melodramatic actor, in Richard to Kean, and did not conceal their preference, much to the disgust of the great little man; in fine, they had a dramatic and histrionic school of their own, in common with the Surrey, though during its latter years, when Shepherd and Creswick were at the older house, "the Vic." was almost unique in its company and *répertoire*, adhering to the old lines upon which it first started. The name was changed in 1833 from the Cobourg to the Victoria, in honour of the princess, who once paid the theatre a visit.

H. BARTON BAKER.

## THE FRENCHWOMAN IN THE EAST.\*

WHAT is a female *officier d'académie*? One thinks of the travelling fellows at Oxford and Cambridge, who were bound to do so many miles in the year, and to send back a Latin letter describing what they had seen. Sometimes they wrote books. I fancy dear old Eustace's "Classical Tour," beloved by Byron, was the outcome of such a subsidized journey. Above all they were to be fellows, which in those days meant bachelors; whereas both the *officiers* whose travels I've been reading are married ladies. *En revanche*, they both wore, during the greater part of their wanderings, dresses of such an unfeminine type that when one of them was presented to the Shah, his majesty said: "You don't mean to tell me that that young lad is a woman." Otherwise, they seem very unlike. Mme. Ujfalvy Bourdon, as drawn by Vwillier, is so tall and stalwart, one does not wonder that, whenever they could, her Cashmere coolies should have shirked carrying her "palkee," and that she elbowed her way into the Srinugger bazaar, despite the attempts of the British resident's wife to hold her back. I should not like to have a cut from that dog-whip of hers, or for her to come down on my toe with those jack-boots into which she has tucked her knickers. Mme. Dieulafoy, on the other hand, in Bayard's portrait, is pretty and *piquante*, and she knows it. She wears man's trousers, a loose short coat, a black neck-tie, and a jaunty solar-topee, and looks so attractive astride her black Arabian, that "Marcel" might well have been uneasy, did not the Persian taste, like that of Orientals generally, prefer plump, moon-faced beauties. Anyhow the Shah was wise in pronouncing that she had done quite right in discarding woman's dress if she meant to go about unveiled. "A woman can't do it over here," said the Light of the World, "without making a street row. It would be nearly as bad, I think, if a Persian lady was to walk in her usual out-door dress on your Paris boulevards; and my people are much more excusable. A strange female face is to them a prodigy; very few have ever seen one outside the family circle."

Well, this pretty little lady was fourteen months in the East, and did nearly 6,000 kilomètres on horseback, keeping the journals

\*"La Perse, La Chaldée et la Susiane," par Mme. Jeanne Dieulafoy, officier d'académie.  
"Voyage d'une Parisienne dans l'Himalaya Occidental (le Koulou, le Kashmir, le Baltistan, etc.), par Mme. de Ujfalvy Bourdon, officier d'académie.

and taking the photographs and nursing her sick husband through an illness. I'd back her for endurance against Mme. Ujfalvy, who, stalwart as she looks, owns herself a poor mountaineer.

A Cornish mine-boy who could swim, when asked why he hadn't leapt into the sea to save a drowning comrade, said: "My heart's all right, but I was 'teemud';" and Mme. Ujfalvy was certainly "teemud" in coming down the snow slope of the Bourdjila pass. She had a coolie to help her, but after going a little way down, she refused to stir till another was sent back to hold her up on the other side. Another time she confessed that her want of presence of mind spoiled the only bit of sport which came in their way on the whole journey. On the Upper Jhelum they had foregathered with a young American and his wife; and when, near Skardo, a bear crossed the path, the American went for him with a light fowling piece and sent M. de Ujfalvy, who was mounted, to ride slantwise and cut Bruin off from the hills. No sooner, however, had this gentleman started than his wife rode after him, screaming: "My dear, you've got no gun, you'll be killed;" and while he stopped to show her his revolver and to explain that a horse can always distance a bear, the bear settled the question by trotting off up the face of the mountain. "I was very angry with myself for a moment," she says, "but when I came to think it over, I felt I'd done right. A wounded bear is a very dangerous beast, and that fowling piece could not have given him more than a slight wound."

Cold she bore very well, and they had plenty of it; for, beginning from Umballah to Simla, they kept well among the mountains past Kot and Sultanpoor, and Dharmasala and Chamba, and Badravhar, and the Banihal pass, down into the Cashmere valley. Thence, crossing the Zojila pass, and pushing on beyond Skardo, the capital of Baltistan, they got into the savage country, where (in Mme. Ujfalvy's phrase), "the Himalaya stretches out its hands to the Karakorum," and where, near the Mustagh pass, is the biggest glacier in the world. No wonder that she and her husband were often nearly frozen, and that their companion, Mr. Clarke (who seems to have been rather neglected; I hope not because of his English name—he was gathering curios for South Kensington), was quite laid up. Not an inviting route for a man who is going to spend his leave in Cashmere to take his wife along instead of leaving her at Simla; and indeed, a mem-sahib could hardly rough it as Mme. Ujfalvy Bourdon did in her Bloomer costume and without an ayah. Despite her setting all rules at defiance the Maharajah, whose head-gardener and vine grower are Frenchmen, received the party most graciously; sent on a tahsildar and a moonshi to see that they got the best of every thing; turned out a guard of honour for them every now and then; paid their travelling expenses (no trifle in that difficult country), and let their baggage in and out customs free. He

did everything except allow them to go on to Ghilghit, where the little Rajah was in revolt, and where an Englishman had lately been murdered. What had brought them to Cashmere? "The interests of science," as M. de Ujfalvy proudly explained to the Maharajah. "Science" seemed limited to taking anthropological measurements, determining the length of the frontal sinus, &c., of Baltis, Ladakis, &c., and settling the not very important question whether these tribes are Aryan or Mongolian. It was hard work, and the measurements were often one-sexed; for, though the almighty rupee was always powerful enough to persuade the men to stand and be measured, the women (dreading lest a spell should be thrown over them), generally burst into such torrents of tears that the tender-hearted scientist sent them about their business, with a few rupees by way of consolation.

Mixed up with these scientific inquiries was a very active search for curios; and ear and nose rings, bangles, brass work, tea and coffee pots, silver Balti-ware necklaces incrustated with gold and turquoises, were bought up wholesale. Indeed, their fame as buyers made the travellers, on their second visit to Srinugger, literally mobbed by sellers, every one of whom had a brass pot of some kind up his sleeve.

Science suffered from this zeal for art; the money was all spent and the intended route had to be shortened. However, it is something for a woman to have gone through the wild Zodjila pass, and the wilder country round Skardo, and to have been among Baltis and Brokpas and other little-known mountaineers. Mme. Ujfalvy is in her element in really wild scenery. She got quite angry when, on coming down the Banihal pass, she saw the flat vale of Cashmere. "*Je m'abandonnai*," she says, "*à ma colère toute féminine*. I was thoroughly disenchanted. Had I come all this weary way to see a plain, looking almost as bare as a fallow field, and surrounded with very common-place mountains, most of them stripped of their timber, and covered with flowers that one can pick on any hill-side in Europe?" In Baltistan, on the other hand, she finds the Chigar valley magnificent—finer even than that of Skardo; and, as for the view from Fort Askolé, fancy nearly ninety miles of glaciers interrupted only by the mountain peaks between which they lie, and blazing in the glory of an Indian sunset. "I had seen," says our *officier* "the same sort of thing in the Alps and in Styria; but what a difference! Here man is wholly lost. You fancy that the world has been set on fire, and that the flames will next minute meet over your head and shut you in." The height of the Karakorum range has not yet been very accurately determined; but as a whole it is loftier than the Himalaya, while its highest peak is only some 50 yards lower than Mt. Everest.

Though the mountain lasses didn't like to be measured, they were not at all unwilling to be sold. M. Ujfalvy always tried to

get from each tribe a complete costume, male and female; but the latter he was sometimes told were not to be had without their wearers. He thought he had bought a Balti girl's dress; but next morning, at breakfast, the interpreter came in with the announcement: "The girl's here." And there she was, ready to be carried off as a Hagar with Mme. Ujfalvy for Sarah, but determined not to let her clothes go without herself. But even Mme. Ujfalvy tired of nothing but savagery; and one can understand that, on coming back to Cashmere, after her sojourn among the mountains, everything looked better than it did at first sight; the roses were out, and the jessamine and honeysuckle; the women seemed prettier by contrast with their sisters of the hill tribes; a back street in Srinugger, of which she gives us a photograph, looked quite as picturesque as a tumble-down slum in Venice. Her reflection is, "What a pity such a lovely country does not belong to Europeans. They would make it lively, whereas now it is choked to death with Eastern melancholy."

On this second visit to Cashmere, she visited the little "isle of plane trees," where Jacquemont lived more than 50 years ago; and her husband and the Maharajah's French gardener and vine-dresser and distillery manager got up a very French celebration. I can understand their enthusiasm, for Jacquemont's "Letters" is one of my pet French books; he went through most of British India (dying at Bombay), and though he is very un-English in feeling, he is none the less worth reading on that account. Of course she saw all the palaces, Shahlimar (built by Shah Jehan) and the rest, and her photographs give a very good idea of them. Most of them are more or less connected with Noor-Mahal (Shah Jehan's wife), and are by no means so interesting as the ruined temple of Martand, between Verinagh and Srinugger, which, venerable though it looks, Mr. Fergusson says is not older than the eighth century. Early travellers, struck with the Greek type of some of the capitals, said it was built by the workmen of Alexander the Great, just as the local antiquaries in a certain Norfolk town used to show the quaintest of their Mayor's three maces as "a fine example of Saxon work," till a ruthless Cambridge archæologist put them to open shame by pointing out the initials G.II.,R., and asking what they meant.

More interesting still are the huge sculptured stones of the temple of Avantipoor; but both of them are poor compared with the wonderful building at Baidjnauth, up above Kantgra which is really a model of Hindoo art at its best. Nothing Greek here; a typical Brahmin temple, with zebus and other beasts carved in its court yard. If Anglo-Indians' wives in general cared for architecture, Baidjnauth would be a regular pilgrimage place from Simla. I'm glad it isn't; for the English sight-seer is so very fond of picnicing; and I fancy "the mild Hindoo" may share my



horror at sandwich papers, corks, and soda-water bottles, to say nothing of fowl-bones. Fancy these things in the court-yard of a temple; it's as bad as Cromwell turning Peterborough Cathedral into a cavalry barrack. More to the liking of the female society at Simla is polo, which Mme. Ujfalvy saw played by its inventors, the Baltis of Skardo. In Baltistan, every village has its polo ground, though sometimes the nearness of rocks and precipices must be a trial to the player. Yet accidents are very rare; and the "tattoos," usually hog-maned and dock-tailed, are taught to pivot round in a way which even the cleverest rider at Lillie Bridge might envy. I wonder people don't go up to Skardo to watch polo-playing under the shadow of the Karakorum range, with rocks heaped all round, any one of which would answer as a stretcher for the giant Prometheus.

But I'm not going to pick out all the plums from Mme. Ujfalvy's book. Read for yourselves. It's worth reading; and so is her husband's book on "The Old Brass Work of Cashmere," and also his "From India to Samarcand;" for "the interests of Science" (the wish, *i.e.*, to determine by skull measurements the Aryan or non-Aryan origin of obscure tribes) took him on another occasion as far north as the old capital of Timour. I like to see how things which are matter of course to Anglo-Indians, and to those who have been brought up among Anglo-Indians, strike one who is new to Hindoo habits. Mme. Ujfalvy finds it so strange that the Maharajah prefers to eat off fresh lotus-leaves instead of plates; that his servants have muslin over their mouths for fear their breath should make his food unclean; that when he gives a dinner he walks with his guests as far as the dining-room door and then leaves them to themselves. Some of her stories are old. I think I've heard before about the English magistrate who was crossing the Jhelum when two native women slipped off the inflated skins on which they were being carried over and went down stream. As their husbands didn't stir to save them, he jumped in and brought them ashore. By-and-by the husbands came up for baksheesh. "Baksheesh, indeed," cried the magistrate; "in England it's the fellow who saved a man's wife that would look for baksheesh from the husband." "No, sahib; we say that a man wouldn't save a woman's life unless he had some interest in her. You've saved them, so you'd better settle a pension on them." Some of her facts are new, some old. I had not heard that water chestnuts, which used to be eaten by the prehistoric Swiss lake-dwellers, grow so profusely in the Cashmere lakes as to be a real help in times of scarcity. I had heard of that splendid stuff *patou*, or native homespun, just like Irish or Hebridean frieze; and of the floating gardens, which sometimes only too well justify their name, for the thief comes by night, cuts the ropes, and tows away garden and crop. I had heard, too, of the mosque at Srinugger, in which they keep a hair

of Mahomet's beard. Pictures are an abomination to the Mussulman, images he hates worse than the Jew does; but from relic-worship he is no more free than the Methodists, who in Cornwall now and then show some of John Wesley's belongings, just as if he was a mediæval saint. Boating about by moonlight through the water-ways of Srinugger must be delightful. In the clear cool light the mountains look all the better for being treeless; the bridges seem as grand and mysterious as the Rialto. The mouldering lattice-work of the tumble-down houses becomes glorified into something far more picturesque than a Venetian palace; the lamps flitting about on the terraces, the light that streams from the palace windows, make one think of Haroun Alraschid and of

"The fourscore windows all alight,  
As with the quintessence of flame."

Above all, night throws a veil over the dirt which, among a people who only change their shirts once a year, is so distressing by day. Altogether, Cashmere (alas! that since this was written we must say what is left of it) is a place to which the mem-sahib, if she reads Mme. Ujfalvy's book and studies its beautiful illustrations, is sure to insist on being taken during one of her visits to the hills. Dardous and Baltis and such like she will be content to leave to those who travel in the "interests of Science;" a big mountain is only a little one magnified, the largest glacier in the world is only the Mer de Glace multiplied ever so many times. One can imagine all this if one has been to Switzerland; but Cashmere and its lake—they must be something that the rest of the world can't show, for here is a lady who began by talking of disenchantment and bemoaning her hard fate in having come so far to see what she might have seen for 50 francs by taking a season ticket from Paris—actually confessing when she has had a moonlight row on the lake, that Cashmere is not over-rated after all, and that if poor Jacquemont didn't grow enthusiastic about it, it must have been because he was already sickening for the fever that carried him off. As for the glaciers and glorious passes and higher mountaineering, all that may well be left to the few who take the same view of things that Mrs. F. Burnaby does, viz., that going up Mont Blanc and the Aiguille du Midi and half-a-dozen 11,000-ft. *cols* in summer is a mere trifle, and that the healthiest time for a lady to undertake such ascents is the winter. When winter sets in, by the way, the Maharajah clears his capital of strangers, so those of Mrs. Burnaby's mind, being obliged to move on, might turn their attention to the Karakorum giants. In one thing Cashmere compares pleasantly with the Himalaya sanitarium. They, perched each on its spur of mountain, have no walks, or at most one. Everybody complains of this. In Cashmere you can get about in all directions. Will there ever

be tunnels up in that part of the world, like the St. Gothard and the rest? Why not? There's money and energy enough if it was spent aright. The Book tells us man was put upon the earth to subdue it; alas, he has always been so much fonder of wasting his strength in subduing his fellow man! One thing remained a deception to the last, even after Mme. Ujfalvy had come to acknowledge that Cashmere is surprisingly beautiful though it disappointed her at first sight. The fruit is poor; they bring seeds from Europe, but the plants degenerate. It's always so; no such strawberries as those of an English garden; no such grapes in the world as are grown under English glass. The same with everything, except melons, in which Khiva, says Dr. Lansdell, beats us as much as it is inferior to us in apricots and peaches. So much for Mme. Ujfalvy Bourdon. I don't think many English ladies will follow the dustier route of her coquettish sister-officer Madame Dieulafoy. Persia and Chaldea are very interesting—to the archæologist. M. Dieulafoy was sent by the French government to collect specimens of and learn as much as he could about those enamelled bricks and tiles of which the Burlington Club Collection gave some exquisite samples. Those who saw that collection may remember No. 146, the old Persian star-shaped wall tile, with roses and rose leaves in relief. And No. 144 (lent by Mr. Holman Hunt), a chocolate background covered with white foliage touched with green, and, in blue relief, an inscription bearing the name of the Shiah Mahdi, who disappeared as a child in 868 and will come again to bring all the world to the faith. Some of these tiles showed, by their Chinese feeling, that of old there was trade between Persia and the Flowery Land. Persian fleets really went the whole round; but this was before the deadening effect of Mahommedanism. Though the fleets are gone, however, the art lasts on. Good enamelled tiles and bricks are still made; though nothing now made will compare with such glorious work as that of the blue mosque at Tauris, with one vast nave lined with reddish grey enamel, the other with every tint of blue, from the deepest "navy" to the lightest verditer. This splendid 15th-century mosque has been sadly shattered by an earthquake, and has suffered still more through being used as a quarry by the inhabitants. It was built by Sunnis, so the Persian Shiahs think its destruction a pious work. Mme. Dieulafoy's photographs are delightful, whether they represent castles, as at Tauris and Veramine, the very models of our feudal strongholds; or mosques and colleges, of which Sultanieh and Kazbin were wonderful examples; or trees like the plane of Tadjrich which measures twenty yards round; or groups of mollahs or market people so life-like that we think they are going to talk. I never saw a better group than those two Persian women of Maranda, in black cloaks and hoods, talking to the girl who kneels at her work of kneading cut straw and cording to repair

the floor with. And Mme. Dieulafoy's letter-press is full of fun, too. In a particularly bandit-haunted spot they are joined by five or six Persians, who beg to be allowed to travel under the protection of the brave Feringhis. "Je me considérais avec orgueil," she says. "I never felt so proud in my life. What, a *gamin de ma taille* to act as protector to those big-bearded and well-armed men!"

Then, how she chaffs the Persian aga at Djoulfa, who, when, thanks to the English consul, a Russian, everything is ready for the start, comes up in state with all his suite and hopes he may be able to help on their arrangements. "Did your Excellency have a good nap?" is her answer—a very proper one, seeing that, when she had waited on the aga with a letter of introduction she was told he was asleep. What puzzles me is how she learnt Persian. She says she took every opportunity of hearing it spoken, but you may hear a good deal of a language without gaining much unless you know something to begin with. She has a good deal to tell us about the Persian royal family. Nasrred Din's heir apparent was educated by that Mirza Nizam, who, three and twenty years ago, made such a figure at the Ecole Polytechnique. But the bigots are still very strong in Persia; and they appealed to the Shah about the frightful immorality of allowing the future king-of-kings to wear clothes of the European cut. Mirza, only saved from death by the entreaties of his pupil, was banished to Kachan; and the prince, who is hereditary governor of Tauris, so completely lost all authority that his servants behaved worse than those of Robert of Normandy, and plundered him not of his clothes only but of his food. His Royal Highness appealed in a very Oriental way to the prefect of police, having him well bastinadoed and then a few days after sending him a robe of honour by way of consolation. The Shah thought this hardly a promising system of government; so the young prince now lives in retirement at Teheran, and probably when his time comes to succeed to the throne there will be a revolution. The Kadjars, the royal tribe of Persia, are Syrian Turcomans brought in by Tamerlane. Shah Abbas set them to guard the frontiers, and their chief, Fattaly Khan, having been made commander of the forces by Tamasp II., the next step was to seize the throne, which they did towards the end of the last century. Napoleon, anxious to attack us on the side of India, sent out General Gardanne to the Shah. We check-mated him with General Malcolm, who purchased the Persian neutrality at £1,000 a day. But, on the fall of Napoleon, the pension suddenly ceased, and when the Shah showed our ambassador the treaty, this patriotic gentleman, Mme. Dieulafoy was told, tore off the signatures and swallowed them! That is how history is made. One thing that Mme. Dieulafoy did showed her energy if not her good sense. At Kazbin her husband was taken very ill; and unwilling to trust him to

the Persian doctors, who have not got beyond Avicenna; unable too, to doctor him herself, for her medicine chest had gone on with the heavy baggage, she determined to push on to Teheran. How she has to waste a day in hunting for and getting horses and a covered litter; how the carriage gets "stodged" on the road and is pulled out next morning by the oxen of some passing peasants; how, reaching Teheran at night, she loses her way and drives about in frantic search of the Christian quarter, is so well told that we almost forget the husband who was getting worse all this time, and who would probably have fared better under the disciples of Avicenna.

I said few English ladies would care to follow her; and yet there are few more interesting routes for those who prefer men to mountains, and beautiful "mirhabs" like the Alhambra, and octagons like a cathedral chapter house, only cased in lusted tiles, to the rather monotonous glaciers of Baltistan. The people are lively and interesting; they reminded her of her own Languedoc peasants, and she lived a great deal among them, seeing everything and telling her story in a business-like way, which is a great improvement on the "gush" of many lady-travellers. Persia is a land of ruins and cool mosque-cloisters and underground reservoirs; and its minarets, if one may judge by that at Narsbirvan, dispose of the Irish round towers mystery. The Irish round tower is a minaret the lower buildings of which have been dwarfed into insignificance. Not that the old Irish were Mahommedans, but the oldest church towers all over Europe are round; the pattern came from the East and probably the builders as well; and the fashion of square towers didn't set in till later, and had scarcely reached Ireland at the time of the English invasion. One is glad to find that the Persians are at last opening their eyes to the folly of letting curio-hunters steal the tiles from half ruined mosques and sell them at Teheran. Many of the ruins are now "closed to the public;" and with Mahommedans one must always be a little more careful than Mme. Ujfalvy was with heathens. Mme. Ujfalvy has a good story of how her husband stole the sacred dagger in a temple near Sultanpoor and left a rupee in its place.

Zenana work? Yes, it is going on in Persia, thanks to the Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul. Mme. Dieulafoy saw a good deal of them at Teheran where they helped her to nurse her husband through his long illness. The Shah gives them a yearly subsidy; and besides the Armenians who come in great numbers, they get a good many Mussulman girls, who learn sewing, ironing, and other household arts, and also some notions of history and geography. At Djoulfa the Armenians have a sisterhood of St. Catherine; but of course Mme. Dieulafoy thinks them very poor creatures compared with the Frenchwomen.

Well, France may be proud of her *officiers d'académie*, if they

are in the habit of making such journeys and writing such journals as Mesdames Dieulafoy and Ujfalvy Bourdon. If any English-woman thinks of following in their steps, let her be sure to learn photography, for her own sake as well as for the sake of those who will read her inevitable book.

H. S. FAGAN.

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### THE TRIAL DAYS OF LIFE.

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WHISPERINGS of tender leaves,  
Twitterings beneath the eaves,  
Lights and shadows gently falling,  
Ring-doves cooing, blackbirds calling.

Rustlings in the distant woods,  
Balmy airs and changeful moods,  
Skies with deeper azure glowing,  
Setting wild flowers all a-blowing.

Primroses and daffodils,  
Listening to the sparkling rills,  
Waking from their winter slumbers,  
Murmuring in fairy numbers.

Creamy blossoms everywhere,  
May wreaths scenting all the air,  
Far away the meadows laughing  
At the cuckoo's saucy chaffing.

Like some ancient pleasant rhyme  
Merrily the hours chime,  
But such dalliance lasts not ever,  
Days must come for stern endeavour.

Days of storm and weary strife,  
Crushing all the growing life,  
Cruel winds and bitter showers  
Scattering the weeping flowers.

Through such days of loss and pain,  
Hope still rings her sweet refrain,  
"Not in vain sad hours are creeping,  
Summer comes and harvest reaping."

Blessed Hope, thro' bitter tears,  
Whisp'ring 'mid all doubts and fears,  
To brave hearts the firm assurance,  
Conquest comes through much endurance.

E. C.



## LUCY'S HANDKERCHIEF.

THE ROMANCE OF A BROUGHAM.

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EVER since I incautiously confided to my wife in a moment of elation that our income had risen above high-water mark and was now a comfortable £2,000 a year, she had done nothing but insinuate that in her opinion we were now entitled to possess ourselves of that patent of gentility, that acme of comfort, a small, well-hung, perfectly-built brougham.

At first she mentioned the brougham as a matter of course: "Now our income was so good, *of course*, I should see that she was entitled to the brougham." In return I cautiously put before her the fact that this same income had risen, not by "leaps and bounds," but by intensely hard work, and that until I had funded sufficient capital to make it a certainty depending no longer entirely on my exertions, we were not entitled to look upon it as a permanency; but alas! my wife had her side of the question too, and as we had no children, and indeed no one to care for, she was perhaps in the right. But my old cautious habits stuck to me, and I was not going to give way at once and buy the carriage on which she had set her heart, without due thought and consideration.

Then she took to all sorts of feints, all descriptions of jesuitical behaviour, at which I looked on, unmoved may be, but with a certain amount of admiration.

She would come in from her drive in the pony-carriage, exhausted with battling against the cold winds, or she would feel faint with the extreme heat to which she was exposed in the same little vehicle, which at one time had been the delight of her heart; or she would confess with a sigh and a smile that she was not so young as she had been, and that she really could not dine at the de Smythes', my most influential clients, if she had to go there in a hired conveyance that shook her to pieces, or in her own little phaeton, in which her careful toilette was rendered useless, and caused her to arrive after the eight miles in a dishevelled condition that only the youngest and fairest of the sex could stand. But perhaps the last straw was laid when she remarked plaintively that I ought to read Mrs. Carlyle's letters and see what she suffered through her brougham-less condition, for I then perceived her case was hopeless, and that I should not have any peace night or day until her wish was fulfilled, and having glanced at the chronicle of

woe in three volumes mentioned above, I gave way, and though I did not positively promise to buy the carriage I allowed the subject to be discussed in all its bearings, and finally passed many an afternoon in Long Acre with my wife, examining into the different merits and peculiarities of the divers carriages displayed by the makers. At last I actually selected one, the price was all it ought to be, the colour was good, we sat in it together, separately, and then together again. I seated myself heavily on the cushions, I leaned back gracefully, we ascended and descended slowly and cautiously, then quickly and carelessly, shut and opened windows and doors, and in fact could find no fault at all, until the maker foolishly remarked that the price was low (I called it high—£110!), because it was second-hand. That was enough for Margaret; she descended at once and for the last time, and turned her back on the astonished owner, remarking that she hoped there was nothing in our appearance to warrant the insult he had just bestowed upon us.

In vain he protested that half the carriages in London were bought like this; in vain he appealed to me and to all his men to corroborate his statement. Margaret would not hear of his apologising, and she walked off, far too upset to make any further researches that day, and could hardly be consoled until a night had passed, and she was somewhat mollified by suggestions that came to her in the watches thereof, and caused her to feel that now she knew how the Jones's had bought their brougham, a problem that she frankly confessed had often troubled her much, when she pondered over it. "But I will never have anything second-hand," she concluded; "a second-hand thing means that either it is a failure, that faults hidden from the eye are discovered in use, or else it means that the person who has owned the property, whatever it is, has lost money, and that is an omen I for one could never draw down upon myself."

My legal mind naturally saw that Margaret's first premiss was good, and though her second was simply contemptible, I knew and appreciated her superstitious weaknesses, and had learned from experience that a woman who cried for a good half hour if she saw the new moon first through glass, or who almost tore her hair if I suggested running down to a seaside place on a Friday to remain until Monday, had long passed the stage when either derision or argument could move her to reconsider the verdict she had pronounced.

But the price between a new and second-hand brougham was so very appreciable that for the first and only time in my life I warily set to work to deceive and circumvent my loving and confiding wife; and when I heard from one of the many houses of business we had haunted so persistently that at last they had a carriage that must suit us, if we really meant buying at all, I meanly sneaked round by Long Acre alone, and implored the

owner not to breathe a word about the second-handedness of the carriage, telling him rashly of Margaret's weaknesses, and exposing myself to the pitying smiles of master and men, who had from that moment almost a smaller opinion of me than of my wife; and I am firmly convinced my confession caused the worthy builder of carriages to clap on guineas instead of pounds, thus making a clear gain of £5 5s. by the transaction.

But Margaret saw nothing of all this when we called the next day to see the carriage, and repeated all the old processes of sitting in it, looking into all the construction, trying the springs and so on. She was simply delighted with it; the shape was so new, the colour so becoming, and I had completed the bargain, when all at once she turned to Mr. Wiggins and said, "Of course this is a new carriage? Mr. Bertram doubtless has told you my dislike to a second-hand vehicle."

"Of course, my dear; I told Mr. Wiggins all about it," I remarked, my stylographic pen refusing as usual to dot the i's in Wiggins in the cheque I was writing, and giving me the opportunity of banging it down on the desk to remind Mr. Wiggins of his duty to me, if not to his Creator.

"Does it look second-hand?" asked the builder reproachfully, hedging cleverly, and answering my wife's question with another one.

"I can't say it does," answered Margaret, "but——"

"My dear," I ejaculated, "if you don't like the carriage say so; but I don't think it is fair to cross-question Mr. Wiggins as if he were a witness in the box. I am sure he has told you all there is to tell. Come, which is it to be?" and taking the cheque between my fingers, I held it ready for destruction.

"Why, of course, I believe Mr. Wiggins' word," said Margaret hurriedly. "I only wanted to be sure," and so saying and promising to let Mr. Wiggins know how she liked it, we walked home through the December streets, perfectly satisfied, both of us, with our purchase and newly acquired dignity.

But oh! had I known, could I have in any way foreseen, the dis-  
sement that would be required of me, even for the sake of saving £50—though they did buy the harness, rugs, footwarmer and a deep fur cape for John—would I have purchased that dreadful carriage.

Of course the coachbuilder's men who brought it to our stables told John, and John had to be squared, Mary the housemaid showed by her smile at dinner, when my wife was relating one of the many incidents connected with the carriage, and mentioned how nearly we had bought a second-hand one, that John, who was the perpetual sweetheart of every parlour-maid we had, had confided in Mary, and of course I had to have a word or two with her on the subject. I was cross-examined by my mother-in-law more than once, but I could have borne everything, had not a fearful event occurred, which bid fair to break up our domestic

happiness of eight years' standing, and indeed caused such misery, though only temporarily, that I began to believe with Margaret, that second-hand things were unlucky, and that I had drawn down upon my head the fulfilment of the omen that was given when I recklessly purchased the brougham belonging to a man who in one day had lost the savings of years, and had shot himself, leaving little for his creditors, and nothing for the wife who had been purchased from her titled friends to give a hall-mark to the money that after all had done her and hers no good, and had departed as it came, leaving Lady Lucy Davies with a stained name, and a prospect before her of poverty, even greater than she had shared in the halls of her father the Earl of Bareacres. For she had made over her settlement to the creditors and so angered her father, by what he called her Quixotic folly, that he refused her shelter, and would not hear a word about her, even when her mother told him that Lucy had gone out as a nursery-governess.

Just about the time I heard this story, my wife and her mother went away for their Easter holiday, an event that occurred each year of our lives. Margaret was an only child, and her mother used to say this fortnight reconciled her to the fact that her cherished plan of always sharing her daughter's home was rendered impossible by my temper and disgusting habit of smoking in every room in the house, and as I considered her absence from our roof cheaply purchased at the cost of this trip, I took it as a matter of course, and receiving my wife's injunctions not to smoke in her brougham, nor to go out in it if it rained or was muddy, when *of course*, no one can think of using a covered carriage, and above all not to allow any of my vulgar friends to scratch the cushions, or dirty the rug, I saw her off at the station, returning home in the sacred vehicle, determined to make the best of the time before me.

Something, I know not what, during that drive home impelled me to look more closely into the inner pockets of the carriage than I had ever done before. I discovered at least three I had never seen; I found a mysterious spring that disclosed a most useful arrangement for smoking; and finally I found out another little niche, to correspond, to hold card-case, or purse doubtless, but, of course, containing neither, yet holding in its innermost recesses a tiny fine handkerchief, marked beautifully in stitching of some kind or other with the simple name "Lucy."

It was such a small suggestive piece of cambric too!—so soft and delicate, yet crushed into a little heap as if it had been hurriedly concealed there, when it was wet with tears, and so had been forgotten. I could almost imagine that it was still damp, and I believed I could trace the little fingers' shape that had held it and thrust it away into its hiding-place, where I returned it mechanically when we arrived at home, and, must I confess it? utterly and entirely forgot all about the handkerchief that had

made me almost feel sentimental for the first time in my somewhat prosaic life.

Indeed, I should never have thought of it again, had I not curiously enough met Lady Lucy Davies in her capacity of governess, at my friend Fortescue's table, when she and I had quite a long confabulation, in which I told her all about our purchase, promising to take her for a drive, if she would be sure and never let either my wife or the Fortescues know that the carriage was once her own. Of course it was extremely foolish, and in very bad taste of both of us; but Lady Lucy was only 19, poor little soul, and had evidently been entrapped into her marriage against her wish by one of the biggest scoundrels on earth, and I dare not tell my wife because of the second-handedness of the brougham, without stating which fact our drive together would have looked rather purposeless and most idiotic, and so as usual one slip led to another, and by the time my wife returned, Lady Lucy and I had had two or three drives, in the which I had shown her the handkerchief and begged her to leave it there, as it would seem like a hostage, or as if she still had a part in the little carriage that had been once her own.

Bear with me, gentle reader. I was forty, and looked quite patriarchal, and Lucy was only 19, and despite her black frocks—she had utterly refused to wear weeds—looked even younger, while she had already told me where her heart was, and how when He returned from China to marry her, they meant to buy back the little carriage, which had been Lucy's one piece of pleasure and the only place where she had been alone, because Davies detested driving except he held the ribands, and she would never go with him in his high dog-cart, because she was such a coward, and because—because—he was rarely in a fit state to drive.

When Margaret came back I was literally dying to tell her the story, but something always prevented me, until one evening, when I had been to see the Fortescues, and Lady Lucy had told me that she was coming to call the next day with Mrs. Fortescue on my wife, and with a laughing precaution to “remember the brougham,” I went home determining to tell as much as I could without disclosing the part the carriage had played in the little romance connected with my friend's governess, and I was about to do so when something in my wife's manner struck me as curious, and instead of beginning about Lucy at once, I asked meaningly, and may be a trifle sardonically:

“Has your mother been here to-day, Margaret?”

“Mamma has only just left me,” replied my wife with great dignity. “She has gone to the spare-room to wash her hands, and will be down at once.”

“Oh! confound it!” I exclaimed; “haven't you had enough of her company? I had a thousand and one things to tell you; and now our evening is all spoiled.”

"Don't insult me, if you please," remarked Margaret, in her most majestic manner. "You have considerably more to tell me, I know, than you ought to have; but I should prefer to hear your statements in my mother's presence."

"Then you just won't," I replied with equal firmness. "I am not going to speak at such a disadvantage; besides, my little story is too pretty and pathetic to be snapped and snarled on like a dog with a bone. You have a little sentiment in your composition, even your mother——"

"Has none," exclaimed the irrepressible Mrs. Sanderson, sailing in at *my* drawing-room door, and taking possession of *my* arm-chair, quite as if they were her own. "I had enough of that in Mr. Sanderson's time to last the rest of my life. What you have to say to this poor deceived child is said before her mother; then I can give her the benefit of my advice and my experience."

"She wants neither the one nor the other," I said hotly. "By jove, you're behaving like a mother-in-law in a farce. Margaret is of full age; she is thirty-six, and she is my wife. I am master here and say——"

"Dinner ready!" announced Mary, looking at me in a way I quite understood. I allowed my wife and mother to precede me, while I turned down the gas, an economy I have always practised and should, I believe, if the house were falling. "They've found out something about the brougham, sir!" was whispered in my ear; "I heard 'em a-going it, and, sir——"

Here a silvery voice broke in from the other room, "Mary, come at once; the soup is getting cold. Leave your master to turn down the gas if he likes," and Mary, her warning unfinished, disappeared, while I followed her looking and feeling unreasonably guilty and wretched, never doubting for one moment that my wife's anger was caused by the discovery that her cherished little carriage had been some one else's before it was hers. My wife and mother-in-law received me with a stony politeness that was fifty times more trying than a storm of reproaches would have been.

My remarks were answered, of course, but in such a tone, that I could hardly restrain myself until the walnuts and almonds and raisins—good lasting things both of them, that kept up the genteel appearance of dessert, without any appreciable expense—came on the table, and Mary, with a sympathizing glance, left me to my fate and my irate womenfolk.

"Now I should think you could explain your conduct," said Mrs. Sanderson, "that is to say, if you can explain such dastardly behaviour. Bad as was Mr. Sanderson's conduct as a rule, he never ventured to deceive me as you have deceived this poor confiding child."

"Hang it, madam," I exclaimed, remembering suddenly all the departed's many peccadillos, out of more than one of which I



had had to assist him in my legal capacity; "I may have deceived Margaret, and I am very sorry for it; but I never have been in danger of my country's laws. I venture to add, too, that I should never have deceived my wife had it not been for the imbecile superstitions she must have obtained from you. As it is—I'm very sorry I did, and no one can say or do more than that."

Here to my intense astonishment, Margaret rose from her seat, burst into a flood of tears, and casting herself into her mother's arms, sobbed out, "He has confessed; it is quite true; there is nothing left for me but death."

"Or the Divorce Court," suggested her mother soothingly, patting her daughter consolingly and drying her tears, while I looked on fairly struck dumb. "You forget the Divorce Court," and she gazed at me so vindictively that I fairly burst out laughing. "Inhuman monster!" she exclaimed, "even your knowledge of law shall not protect you from justice. In no danger of your country's laws, are you not? We'll see about that," and putting her hand into her pocket, she appeared to be about to confront me with some proof of my evil conduct, when Margaret remarked in a faint, exhausted voice, "Not yet, mamma dear; I cannot bear it yet."

Wild ideas rushed through my head. Had Wiggins turned traitor, and given her a written acknowledgment of our mutual crime? Had she forced my desk and discovered the receipt? "To one brougham, &c., &c., second-hand." Had she got a statement from John? Oh! it was all too ridiculous, and I really could not see my way to an explanation, for a certain sense of guilt did undoubtedly oppress me; besides which the moment I opened my mouth, that instant one or the other of the ladies said or expressed something so contemptuous that I sat paralyzed, wondering what on earth could be the end of the matter.

At last, seeing preparations on their part to leave me alone, I left my seat, locked the door with much determination and rose to the occasion without further ado.

"You must and shall listen to me," I said firmly; "I do not in the least understand why the mere fact of my deceiving my wife should cause her to behave as she is now doing. Heaps of men constantly deceive their wives and without the smallest possible excuse, while my trifling deviation from the paths of truth was done solely and simply for her good; if she had been told she would never have tried the carriage. Oh! really it is too, too childish, all this," I added as I watched their faces; "if Margaret had been like any one else, the whole matter would not have been worth a moment's thought. I venture to state that half the owners of broughams in London have done just as I did."

"Your attempt to explain is an aggravation of your offence," said Margaret, getting whiter and whiter. "Men, I know, are utterly bad as a rule, but they are generally decent in their con-

duct; they do not estimate their faults openly by saying that such deception is the rule. No, after to-night I never speak to you again. I have evidence, and I shall place it before my Uncle John; he will know if it is sufficient to obtain my release."

"My good girl!" I exclaimed, my temper leaving me entirely, "your Uncle John is about the most litigious lawyer on the rolls, but not even he would counsel a divorce on any evidence you can possibly have. I tell you I'm sorry I deceived you, very sorry; but let that suffice. I shall not let you go out of this room until I know that you will think no more of a matter that would be really too childish did you not take things so much to heart."

"I've been the laughing stock of the servants," sobbed Margaret, muttering a little.

"And John will give evidence," said my mother-in-law, "even if *that* is not sufficient," and despite Margaret's protest, the dear lady produced and waved in my face, neither receipt nor confession from Wiggins, but Lucy's tiny, pretty little handkerchief, which, after due display, she returned to her pocket, slapping it triumphantly as if to say, "There, what do you say now?"

I paused for a moment without speaking, and then I said:

"Margaret, I am indeed sorry the matter has taken this form. Lady Lucy—(here my mother-in-law sniffed audibly and muttered '*Lady* indeed!' beneath her breath)—Lady Lucy," I repeated emphatically, "was going to call here to-morrow with the Fortescues, and had you allowed me, I should have told you part of her sad little story this evening. Now I may as well tell you the whole," and beginning from the beginning I laid before her the truth, passing lightly over the second-hand part of the business, and dwelling very much indeed on Lucy's hard fate, and the lover in China, who was bound to return to her the moment he could afford to do so.

My wife listened very quietly, stopping her mother when she gave any sign of unbelief, and then she said: "You will allow, at all events, that I was right. I knew a second-hand thing must be an unlucky possession; now confess, was I not right?"

I thought guiltily of the charming acquaintance and the pleasant drives that Lucy and I had had, and felt almost inclined to say no; but then I looked at the other side of the question, and taking several other things into consideration too, such as my mother-in-law, and Margaret's tears, I said boldly: "Yes, you are right, my dear; but then you always are. Come, now, let us kiss and be friends," and we suited the action to the words, while Mrs. Sanderson sat murmuring at her daughter's weakness and my undoubted influence over her.

"A man who once deceives his wife, even about a trifle," she began, with the air of enunciating an axiom that was enough to make any one wild.

"Oh! never mind that, mamma," said Margaret impatiently; "I was foolish or this would never have happened; still, I shall never like the carriage again."

"Lady Lucy wants to buy it back," I remarked, "when the lover comes from China; by that time, I have no doubt, I shall be able to afford to have one built to your own order; until then, your romantic mind will surely find food in contemplating her little story. Why, our happiness, our good luck in each other, the very fact of our keeping the carriage until the young people are happy, should be quite enough to reconcile even the bad luck that Lucy's handkerchief bid fair to bring us."

"Lucy, indeed!" sniffed my mother-in-law.

But despite her sneers, Lucy it became, and Lucy it remained all the rest of the time, becoming dear Lucy when the little carriage took the bride and bridegroom to the station, and dearest Lucy when my wife and I stood god-parents to the very nicest baby possible, and that means to grow up under our fostering care positively devoid of the least superstition and bound by a thousand vicarious oaths never to deceive his at present doubtless unborn wife in the very smallest possible particular.

J. E. PANTON.

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## LA COMBALLAZ.

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**D**AY-DREAMING is a first-class occupation, for many reasons ; let who will deny the fact. The power of conveying oneself, at a moment's notice, away from bricks and mortar, turmoil and worry into a nice, clean mountain hollow, where the scent of pines is perceptible and haste absorbed by grasshoppers ; where their chirrup is the only noise, and the very clouds drift lazily through clefts in the solemn peaks, or vanish comfortably into thin air ; this faculty, I say, ought to be cultivated. Firstly, because in this age economy is commendable and the amusement inexpensive, it is possible in this way to travel very far without spending a farthing, and lastly, because it is wiser to remember Nature than think of our neighbours' sins and follies, as in idle moments we are apt to do. The other reasons may be supplied at pleasure. Taking the lesson to heart, instead of criticizing Madame B.'s *coiffure*, I will contemplate the Valley of Les Ormonds and visit that earthly paradise, La Comballez.

First let me choose a comfortable chair ; then shut my eyes and I see—wait a little—I see——

The Rhone Valley. But it is too hot for comfort ; the corn is changing colour, the scenery is exquisite, but horseflies triumph over man and beast alike. Breezes, anything but cool, sweep up from Lake Leman, shaking the walnut trees impatiently and robbing the jessamine of stars ; they are laden with the perfume of new-mown hay, inexpressibly sweet after the atmosphere of London, but they are not cool ; they arouse expectation only to disappoint it. I will order a carriage at Aigle and prepare to enjoy myself elsewhere.

Ascending gradually from Aigle through wooded gorges where yellow foxglove nods from bosky hollows, and strawberries blush under their overhanging leaves ; where butterflies—brown, crimson, blue and speckled—circle over ferny banks and silver torrents line the sombre cliffs, I catch glimpses of the *Dent du Midi* cleaving the azure haze with seven snow-wreathed peaks, and of that gentle valley which stretches at its feet to Champéry, with its curving purple slopes all tipped with gold. By the time the mountain wind will greet me at Seppey and another bend in the road disclose the white glaciers above the *Diablerets*, I shall believe every one of the weird legends that charmed my childhood.

La Comballaz is a collection of scattered chalets, exactly half-way between Aigle and Chateau d'Eix. Herr Ziegler's "Hotel de la Couronne" stands under the shadow of Mont d'Or, facing the road. Before it a green bank slopes down into a narrow ravine where a brook sparkles over stones and hides itself under firs. Immediately from this ravine there rises a range of mountains, the largest of which is called the *Chausée*. To climb the *Chausée* is a favourite "before breakfast" expedition, as the last half hour's climb is steep and it is generally thought wiser to have the worst over before the sun gets high. A little to the right, a huge sphynx-like face turns up to the sky. This is the *Chamossaire*, eternally sleeping on a green couch ornamented with pine woods. Between the *Chamossaire* and the *Chausée* a distant glacier marks where the *Diablerets* are hidden, and turning from it to the Rhone Valley, the *Dent du Midi* is seen towering above the clouds.

The hotel itself is a three-storied house with two long wings, one on either side. Like the life within, it is plain and simple, but very healthy. Twice a day, at different hours, the *diligences* from Aigle and Chateau d'Eix bring letters from Geneva or Berne; sometimes passengers alight, but these seldom remain, as the resources of La Comballaz are comparatively unknown. It is a significant fact, however, that among those who have stayed at "La Couronne" some return year after year. It is about six o'clock when my *Ein spanner* drives up to the door and the *table d'hôte* supper is almost ready. My room is at the end of the south wing and commands a lovely view; it is uncarpeted as usual, but I forget that in recognising old friends. Here is the table at which I used to write last year, and the jug I used to cram with flowers; here is the identical crack in the ceiling through which the rain filtered after the big thunder-storm; and here is the window through which I used to cry *kick-erie-kee* to rouse the pretty Jewess from her studies. I wonder what she is doing now!

Hark! there is the bell, and the guests are trooping in. Surely that is M. Talische, the editor of the "Bibliothèque Universelle," that I see in the gallery, clad as of old in spotless white, and beaming benevolently through his spectacles on a small boy who clings to his coat tails. I greet you, sir, and I wish you all good fortune! There goes the second bell; I must go downstairs.

The *salle à manger* is a long broad apartment, encased on two sides by covered galleries which are divided from it by glazed windows and wonderfully painted blinds. Tables follow the course of three walls, capable of holding from forty to fifty persons. Though not more than thirty are present when I take my seat, the din of conversation carried on in French, German and English is considerable. All my old friends are there, but they have not recognised me. I shall have nothing to do except eat and listen. Near me sits M. Talische. He is not handsome; his dinner-coat is very black, his collar very white, and his hair, in spite of brushing,

will curl round a sunburnt neck. He speaks in a soft *staccato*, generally about food; and this is his twenty-first summer at La Comballaz. He is the only live editor I have ever seen. When I saw him last he was the object of an intense awe and admiration which deprived me of words when, on one occasion, he presented me with a few *Alpenrosen*, the last of the season. Farther on is a lady in widow's weeds; her accent is peculiar, her sentiments more peculiar, and the time she chooses for announcing them most peculiar of all. Opposite, looms the English Chaplain, dignified and grave.

"Yes," he says, in measured tones. "I have met many queer individuals in my life. One of the queerest was a man who came over with me in a ship from Australia. For the first six weeks he got his berth and board free by a very simple expedient. He slept in the steerage, and dined in the second class. The respective stewards, you see, were only accountable for the passengers in their own departments and each thought the fellow belonged to the other's jurisdiction. Suspicion soon became aroused, however, and the culprit was caught. When questioned by the captain, he produced a lieutenant's commission and declared he was a British Officer. Of course no one believed him, but we had no Army List on board and the lie could not be proved. We determined to ascertain the truth on arriving at Aden. But here he did a very clever thing. As soon as the gangway was dropped he rushed ashore and borrowed the list from the Post Office, which he no sooner had in his possession than he threw away. Half-an-hour later the captain asked for it and was informed that there was but one in the town, which had just been lent and had not yet been given back."

Here the noise from the French division became deafening.

"Law! What a lot of grimaces the man makes! Can't 'e sit sthright on 'is chair? What's 'e goin' to do next, hi wondher? Good gracious!" exclaims the lady in the widow's cap, referring to a magnificent old Swiss in a violet-velvet skull-cap, who at the moment was brandishing his knife vigorously.

"Hi should think 'e'd cut 'is throat, if 'e don't look hoat!" she continues, bending forward to view the phenomenon and speaking in a loud but sweet voice. "What's that you say, my dear?" this to a girl next to her. "'E understands Henglish? Law! So much the betther. Hi 'ope it will do 'im good; that hi do. Hi couldn't tell 'im to be'ave like a gentleman, you know; not to 'is face. But if 'e 'ears! Why, hi 'ope hit will do 'im good; that's hall. Law! But do look hat 'im."

A silence followed this speech, and the Chaplain looked surprised.

"J'ai vu à Gryon un enfant extrêmement sage," observes a French lady, smacking her lips softly between each clause, with an air of extreme relish. "Ex-trè-me-ment sage. Il ne fait point de bruit. Jamais je ne l'ai entendu."



"Pauvre enfant!" ejaculated some one; "et il était heureux?"  
"Il mangeait très bien, madame," replies the old lady, sedately.

But enough of conversation, my friends have recognised me at last. During the next few days I stroll with them along easy paths of which there are numbers; we gather orchids and ferns and grasses till it seems a shame to gather more; they tell me stories, which, I fancy, I heard from them last year though they sound as fresh as ever. One little girl persuades me to join a pilgrimage to Lake Liozon. "It is only a two hours' walk," she declares, "and oh! you will like it so much. It is just like an oil painting!" No one could resist such a description; I promise to go next morning, and fulfil my word to the letter.

A Jewish-looking French professor acted last year as guide and chaperon. All through the early breakfast he was employed in filling his waistcoat pockets with extremely small bottles of *Kirsch*. "I am taking these as a precaution," he explained. "One needs refreshment on the road to give an impetus, and the streams are dangerous—may contain cholera germs. It is always best to be on the safe side." As soon as he had finished stowing away the last bottle, we collected shawls and alpenstocks and started on the journey. Though not quite eight a.m. the sun was hot and the high road unpleasantly dusty; as, however we approach *Les Mosées*, the next village beyond La Comballaz, our leader turned off across the fields towards an inviting wood. We walked through the grass among thousands of grasshoppers and beetles that flashed red, gold, green and blue through the Canterbury-bells and salvia, and, in the far distance, the stern crags behind Chateau d'Œix stood out against the morning sky. There was a delicious feeling of freshness abroad which, nevertheless, did not prevent the Professor from taking one of his "precautions" before commencing to climb the path among the trees. This proved to be pretty good though steep and narrow; at times we stopped for breath, but no one dreamed of weariness. Dame Nature took good care of that, at almost every turn she provided new surprises: now an effect of light and shade; next, a baby torrent clamouring through moss and ferns; then, the first red gentian, a white stone-crop or a veritable torrent to try our skill in fording. We were all astonished at the shortness of the way when, at last, we stood upon the edge of Lake Liozon.

At our feet lay a round pool of deep, transparent blue overhung by barren, precipitous rocks. Where, under their shadow, the lighter colours darkened into purple, a shivering line of ripples started from the shore, and as it trembled onwards each timid wave changed into flame. At first but two glittering points danced on the water, followed by groups of three and five, then as the breeze freshened and the sun broke out behind a passing cloud, the whole tarn became a sheet of burnished gold.

Half hidden in a crevice above, contrasting strangely with the dark stone on which it rested, lay a small patch of snow.

My last adventure at La Comballaz had a comical ending. Two young German ladies, whom I will call Ilse and Greta, persuaded me to join them in a walking expedition to the *Diablerets* and back between the dinner and supper hours at "La Couronne." The carriage fare would have been twenty-eight francs, which we, very properly, considered too much money to spend on a simple frolic, when we had strength to do the distance on foot. So we consulted with Frau Ziegler, who promised to keep something for us to eat, in case we came home late; and having waited for the three o'clock *diligence* with letters, we set off in a leisurely fashion, calculating on being home about nine p.m. We talked poetry and sentiment and laughed a good deal, as girls will when no disturbing element is at hand, and loitered down the stony bridle path that led over the mountain side, pulling the sour red currants overhanging the road to relieve our thirst, for the afternoon was hot. We gave no heed to Greta's cry—

"O Gott! I have the rheumatism in my knee! My boot, also, hurts atrociously. I cannot go so quick!"

In about two hours we approached our destination. The highway wound through the valley below us like a white serpent, and a little farther on a silver stream glided between willows, a church spire peeped through some trees, a few houses clustered around. We recognised the glaciers, now close at hand, and the little waterfalls, and at the other end, closing the entrance as it were, the red stained cliffs of which we had been told.

The "Hôtel des Hirondelles" attracted us, and ordering tea we sat upon the terrace admiring the view, never taking into consideration that the deepening rose upon the distant crags betokened sunset. No, we were happy; the brown bread and butter was delicious; life was too short for mere prudence. Ilse was the first to experience a shock of common sense.

"What time is it, monsieur?" she asked a waiter.

"Half-past six, mademoiselle."

"O Gott!" ejaculated Greta.

"How far is it to La Comballaz?" inquired Ilse anxiously.

"Two hours and a half by the road, an hour and forty minutes by the mountain-path," replied the man with a grin. "Are these ladies from La Comballaz?"

"Yes," said Ilse faintly, then turning to us she continued, "We must take the mountain path. It will not do to be overtaken by night. We shall lose our respectability unless we can creep into the hotel unseen. There is no moon till late, and three girls without a gentleman to take care of them! O Gott! what will mamma say!"

I began to feel as if I had engaged in an improper proceeding, although it had not struck me in that light before. However, I

was not going to disgrace my nation. "There is nothing to be alarmed about," said I coolly. "We calculated on being late for supper. We are *much* better without gentlemen; they are always more or less of a nuisance. I'll lead the way, if you are too much alarmed."

We paid our bill and tried to look as if we did not see the waiter's disbelief in our courage; but though we started homewards at a fair pace, we had not counted on Greta's rheumatism. She soon dropped behind, and I paused to catch the sunset effect on the snow of the Fourchat Pass. Ilse talked philosophy and quoted Goethe, but her calmness took flight for ever when the first star appeared above the glaciers, and examining the place more narrowly, she discovered that it was strange.

"Where are we now?" she cried in dismay.

Overhead towered bare rocks, grim in the deepening twilight; a wood lay directly in front, black and mysterious, and the track ended at a cow-house.

"O Gott! Our respectability!" moaned Ilse.

"The path is down there," said I, peering over a bank. "Come, let us cross the grass," and without waiting for an answer I dashed down the slope, through marsh and meadow, knowing that the others would follow as a matter of course. Now Greta proved her mettle; no one heard more of the rheumatism; neither she nor Ilse uttered a reproach when I lost the way for a second time and piloted them into a running stream. That was a very nasty moment for me. These girls were helpless. In the distance some drunken peasants were howling and I knew that destitution was better than their escort; there was scarcely light to see my hand and the track was lost. Still, I did not let my companions see my fear. I laughed and pretended not to hear the word "respectability," but I was intensely thankful when at last we stumbled on the right path, and came in sight of the lighted windows of "La Couronne." They were on the other side of the stream, to be sure, but that was of little consequence.

Meanwhile in the hotel there had been great excitement. All the gentlemen congregated to tell lugubrious tales, which were capped by others still more dismal from the ladies. The English Chaplain was seen hurrying from group to group, beseeching some one to go in search of us. Nay, he was even heard to exclaim:

"If I had not *three* services on Sunday, I would go myself."

Herr Ziegler, the landlord, became himself anxious when nine o'clock came with no sign of our arrival; and he wisely sent a man with a lantern to look for us along the hill; which act, when it came to the Jewish-looking French Professor's ears, provoked from him the remark,

"What's the use? He will only frighten the young ladies. He has not been introduced."

Nevertheless, the man departed and met us, as weary and foot-

sore we arrived opposite the hotel on the other side of the brook. Turning without a word, he followed us homewards, and the people at La Comballaz, seeing the light change its course, raised a tremendous cheer. But, as the Professor had foreseen, this new addition to our party caused us considerable uneasiness.

"What is that man doing, after us?" I asked Ilse sternly. "I don't like him so close to me."

Ilse looked back; the lantern was bobbing placidly at our heels.

"Passez, monsieur, je vous prie," she said gently.

The youth obeyed in silence.

"Où allez-vous, monsieur?" she asked.

"A la Comballaz," said he.

"How nice!" cried Greta, in German. "Now we can go with him. No one will know that we have not had him all the way from the *Diablerets*, and so our respectability will be saved."

"But is he going to 'La Couronne'?" I asked doubtfully. "Allez-vous à l'hôtel, monsieur?"

"Ja," replied the youth sedately.

"Sprechen Sie Deutsch?" inquired Ilse.

"Ja," returned the youth.

"That is all right," said I; but as we were crossing the bridge an idea struck me.

"Were you sent to look for us?" I asked the lad.

"Ja," answered that imperturbable young man.

A shout of laughter burst from us simultaneously. We laughed till the tears came into our eyes.

"O Gott! My little plan will be the common joke," sighed Greta.

"And here is the *finale*," I cried. "This is the best of all!"

"This" was the population of "La Couronne" in a body, headed by the Professor and a Scotchman, closely followed by the Chaplain who, when he had seen with his eyes, scampered back to tell the few old ladies who had not ventured out. There was much hand-shaking and eager questioning, plenty of broken explanation as we returned to the house the centre of an admiring crowd.

"Is the whole hotel here?" I asked.

"I don't see M. Talische," said Ilse.

"The Bibliothèque?" chuckled the Professor. "Ah! he stood on the balcony till the light turned to follow you; then he uttered a pious exclamation, I think, and went upstairs. No one has seen him since. But how did you get lost?"

As we had reached the hotel by this time, I escaped further examination by going at once to my room, where I ate bread and milk and chattered with the pretty Jewess until past midnight. Next morning we three adventurous damsels awoke to find ourselves heroines. Ilse and Greta were relieved to see that no one

viewed them askance. M. Talische walked up the long *salle à manger* to inquire after our health at dinner-time; and the magnificent Swiss in the violet-velvet skull-cap begged an introduction, and having gained it, overpowered us with compliments. To the world at La Comballaz it seemed a marvellous feat for three girls to extricate themselves from such a dilemma and a yet greater to laugh at their ill fortune. But no one guessed how terrified I had been when the shouts of those drunken peasants broke the silence; or how thankful I felt for having been preserved from evil. It had been no laughing matter to me then.

My day-dream must come to an end. Good-bye, La Comballaz; good-bye, mountains and fir woods where I learned the meaning and value of life. Good-bye, dear people, who were so kind to me. We may never meet again in this world but I thank you, once more, from my heart.

ELWYN KEITH.

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## GLAMOUR.

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TWAS in the days of other years,  
 When love and hope alike were young,  
 When mystic whisp'rings filled our ears  
 And strange, sweet songs were sung:  
 A glamour flooded earth and sky,  
 The glow of sunset kissed the boughs,  
 And in the silence, by and by,  
 Were heard our whisper'd vows.

No day had fairer dawn than this,  
 The sunlight filtered through the limes,  
 The very song-birds shared our bliss,  
 And greeted us betimes.  
 But days have dawned and suns have set,  
 And summers on swift wings have flown,—  
 Our love is dead, and yet—not yet  
 The glamour is outgrown!

One moment memory bridges time,  
 And closes up the gap of years,  
 And lo! beneath this self-same lime  
 The vision reappears!  
 Her eyes anew with love are lit,  
 I grasp her hand—how cold it seems!  
 And then—ah, gone! as shapes that flit  
 Around us in our dreams!

W. C. HOWDEN.

## A CENTENARY IN THE ITALIAN ALPS.

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THE time was August, 1885; the place, the Val Sesia, on the fringe of the Italian Alps, and one of the loveliest approaches to Monte Rosa; the occasion, the 400th anniversary of the birth of Gaudenzio Ferrari, a painter great among the great in the golden age of painting. Only those who have visited Varallo, Vercelli, Novara, and those other cities adjacent to his native valley, where his most ambitious works—chiefly in fresco, and therefore “not transferable”—are preserved, know how fully worthy is this artist’s memory of the highest honours his countrymen can bestow upon it. Ferrari was reckoned by Lomazzo among the “seven great painters of the world,” and has been styled, not unaptly, the Raphael of North Italy. The remote mountain valleys, to which by birth he belonged, for beauty will stand comparison with Titian’s country. Much of his life was spent in the Val Sesia, much of his first work is there enshrined, thus the just pride of the inhabitants in their eminent fellow-countryman has been kept alive in his home for more than three hundred years. Centenary festivals are becoming more and more common; and a showier, more magnificent celebration than that of which we write, may easily be conceived. Scarcely, however, one more pleasing, more thoroughly appropriate in its simplicity, and the prominence throughout of artistic features, to the memory of an ideal artist. The beauty of the natural surroundings lent a charm further to the most ordinary gala proceedings—something we seek in vain to conjure up in great cities.

Valduggia, Ferrari’s actual birthplace, is a hamlet in a sequestered bordering valley. Here the festivities, which lasted four days, were to begin in the open air. It was a general holiday, of course, and the little village market-place was thickly thronged with peasants, waiting eagerly to see what would happen. A bevy of notables from far and near, but mostly connected in some way with the Val Sesia, gathered under a portico, then marched, preceded by the local band, to a platform in front of the house supposed to be that where Ferrari was born. Here the opening speech was delivered. Overhead, an Italian blue sky; around, an amphitheatre of hills, clothed with fine Spanish chesnuts, vines and maize; a steep tiled or thatched roof, or the spire of a church peeping out here and there, betraying the existence of one of those small hamlets, strewn and half hidden amid



the luxuriant vegetation of the hill-slopes. Bands played, flags flew, and all the rural population came out to enjoy themselves. One of the pleasantest features about the centenary was the natural participation in it of the people. Not a man, woman or child, however poor or uneducated, but might comprehend and join in this tribute of thanks and praise. For Ferrari's works adorn many a church the peasantry frequent. Valduggia itself possesses a fresco of the Nativity—sadly damaged, alas—by his hand. The union of churches and pictures was the means of initiating the unlearned into the pleasures of art, and familiarizing them with its achievements, whose power and influence it would be hard to estimate. There is nothing at present that fulfils this purpose so well. Little Valduggia did what it could, in honour of its illustrious son, and so much honour was due to the spot, as to select it for the inaugural ceremony. But it was at Varallo, a small town some ten miles higher up the valley that, on the morrow, the real business of the festival began.

Varallo, for beauty of situation, is perhaps unsurpassed. It is an Italian Salzburg, but outvies its Austrian rival. A picturesque, irregularly-built town, lying at the junction of two Alpine streams, the Sesia and the Mastalone, which here issue from their respective long, narrow wild valleys, leading onward and upward into the heart of the mountain kingdom, to Monte Rosa at last, Varallo has all the local colouring—dear to artists—of an Italian town, and it should be noted that though the inhabitants of Macungnaga, Alagna, Gressoney and other villages of these hill countries are of German origin, the Valsesians are thoroughly Italian. But in Varallo your pleasure, as a lover of the picturesque, is not spoilt, as too commonly is the case in Italy, by the ever-present spectacle of dirt, rags and misery. Blessed by a temperate climate, a fertile soil, and a fine physique, the Valsesians have, moreover, never been degraded by tyranny and oppression, and are proverbial for pluck and independence. They have had many masters, French, Italian, Spanish, but throughout all changes cling tenaciously to certain old privileges, immunities, and rights of self-government, and it was remarked of the documents signed between them and their nominal sovereigns, that they read more like treaties of alliance than of submission.

Straight above the town of Varallo, towers the Sacro Monte, a steep height crowned by the famous sanctuary with which Ferrari's name is associated, as the greatest among the sixty artists, mostly Valsesians, who contributed to its adornment. Behind the mount rises a fine background of loftier heights, clad with Spanish chesnuts, heather and fern. No wonder that Padre Bernardino Caimo, the Milanese Minorite friar, who, three hundred years ago, conceived the idea of erecting in Italy a so-called "New Jerusalem," a model of those places which he, as a pilgrim to the

Holy Sepulchre, had seen kept sacred by the monks in the city of Palestine, and the resort of the faithful, chose, from all Lombardy, the mount that looks down on the red-tiled roofs, church spires, and turret-like chimneys of Varallo. From whatever point viewed, the cluster of oratories—46 in number—and the church that crown the hill, shaded by chestnut trees, acacias and firs, fascinate the sight, and you turn away from it with regret. From above, the view is equally striking of Varallo, the Sesia and Mastalone valleys with the snow peaks of Monte Rosa in the far distance.

The sanctuary of Varallo is well known to English travellers—art lovers—who have zigzagged in these beautiful hill countries. It would be hard to find in North Italy a town at once so remote and so artistically interesting. The rival sanctuaries of Orta and Varese, though pleasant places, affording picturesque prospects, have no art treasures to show. But the remains of a wonderful work are here, in the frescoes of the Chapel of the Crucifixion, painted by Gaudenzio Ferrari. For the rest, the contents of these chapels strike the modern eyes more as curiosities than objects of admiration. The representations of the mysteries of the Catholic faith, from the fall of Adam to the Assumption of the Virgin, to which they are devoted, are not only portrayed in fresco on the walls, but in coloured groups of terra-cotta figures—like *tableaux vivants*—that occupy the body of the chapels, which cannot be entered by the general public, only viewed through a grating. Life-like and realistic though some of these figures appear they are often crude or exaggerated. The worst present us with a mixture of the painful and the grotesque, and it is a form of art one would be inclined to condemn altogether, but for an example here and there which strikes as a complete success. Such, in the group entitled “The Dream of Joseph,” is the beautiful figure of the sleeping Joseph, modelled by one Tabacchetti, an artist said to have been of Flemish extraction, a figure which alone might make one hesitate to affirm what might not be accomplished in this line. The same may be said of some of the terra-cotta figures in the Crucifixion Chapel, which, as well as the frescoes on the walls, are by the hand of Ferrari. He seems, indeed, to have been a sort of universal genius—painter, architect, modeller, natural-philosopher, optician, poet and musician, “playing excellently well on the lute and on the lyre,” we are told.

Varallo is a small town of no more than 3,500 inhabitants, but it is the quality not the quantity of the population that raises a place from insignificance, and Varallo, whilst sufficiently remote from high civilization to remain, hitherto, free from the ills it brings in its train, is sufficiently well provided with all necessary comforts. Here you may see the sewing machine and the distaff being worked, side by side, by two neighbours. Gas, in the streets or houses, is a pleasure, or a nuisance, still to come; but there are three postal deliveries a day, and several local newspapers, specially

devoted to the concerns of the Val Sesia. It has a good museum, and in the same building a school of art, where rising Gaudenzio Ferraris have the fullest facilities afforded them of improving their talents. Here the Varallo commemoration was inaugurated, and here, in the hall of design of the school on a sunny August morning, the company of ladies and gentlemen who had organized the proceedings assembled, and proceeded thence to the adjacent gaily decorated Piazza Ferrari, there to take their seats on a dais under an awning. On one hand is the house where the painter lived for ten years, on the other, the church of the Madonna della Grazia, within which the wall of the choir screen is entirely covered with his admirable frescoes. No better spot could have been chosen in which to pronounce his eulogy—which was duly read by an impassioned orator—after which the city band struck up a hymn of praise specially composed for the occasion, with choruses sung by children in the costume of the country. These open-air proceedings in their simplicity, good taste, and the equal participation of the whole people in what was going on, recalled the accounts come down to us of the festivals of the ancient Greeks and Romans. In modern capitals such an art festival would be above the heads or beyond the purses of all but the rich and highly cultured, whilst a merely popular holiday largely degenerates into coarse mirth and horse play, at the best. Though the crowd of peasants for the most part, may not have entirely understood the flowing periods of the orator's eloquent penegyric, nor yet have been musically educated, yet they stood there patiently, under the hot sun, eager to catch what they could of the speech and the hymn. And when, the next afternoon, an orchestral and choral symphony, descriptive of the artist's life, was performed in the above-mentioned church, the nave was crowded to suffocation. Some movements of the symphony so transported the audience that they forgot where they were and broke into loud applause. Everybody then looked at his neighbour and said, "Dear, dear, this really shouldn't be! How wrong! One ought not to clap in a church." But the next movement concluded, carried away by delight, they clapped louder than ever. At night the town was charmingly illuminated. Festoons of coloured lamps with white shades cut in the form of lilies, slung across the long narrow streets from end to end, produced an excellent effect. The Varallese, responding to the appeal made them by the masters of the ceremonies, to light up their houses, had done their very best. Some had a display of Chinese lanterns, others adopted the simple expedient of a row of candles with ornamental mirrors behind for reflectors. Only small towns can really be perfectly illuminated in fanciful fashion. In London and Paris separate effects are all that can be successfully aimed at; the general completeness of the whole is unattainable, merged in size and space.

Above all towered the Sacro Monte, whose twinkling lights shone aloft with fairy-like effect. Though the streets were crammed, for Varallo was full to overflowing, the peasants from the numerous villages on the hills having mustered *en masse*, as well as the accredited guests, perfect order and good humour prevailed. There was a show of picturesque costumes of great variety, these characteristic dresses being fortunately still popular in the Val Sesia. It is a pretty custom, too, adopted by many ladies of the wealthier classes, who have married and left the neighbourhood, when returning for a visit, or on some festive occasion, to wear, themselves, the costume of their country, and dress their little girls likewise, vastly more becoming to both, to say nothing of its greater convenience, than any Turin or Milan finery.

On the morning of the fourth day of the *festa* a grand requiem mass by Cagnoni, *maestro di capella* at Novara, the nearest town of importance, composed, as also the symphony, by him expressly for this centenary, was performed in the church on the Sacro Monte—an excellent composition, well executed by orchestra and singers, which brought the ceremonies to an impressive and befitting close.

The fact, the plan of the festival, the manner in which it was carried out, shows how fully alive is the love of art in Italy. The tone, throughout simple, serious, sincere, cheerful, informal, was what one would desire in the public commemoration of a great artist, whose life, from the little that can be gathered about it, one may imagine to have been happy and harmonious—an artist born, not made, who found his vocation as a mere boy, when already he was busy painting for the convents at Varallo and the earliest of the chapels erected on the Sacro Monte. Though he resided for many years at Rome, where he became the comrade of Raphael, and at Milan, where he died in 1549, some of the best part of his life was spent at Varallo. The church of San Gaudenzio contains an altar piece of his—a marriage of St. Catherine—which, if nothing else of his survived, would stamp him as a master. His hand was devoted almost exclusively to the painting of religious subjects, and in the exquisite beauty of the figures of his angels, in particular, he is, perhaps, unsurpassed; they seem really inspired, as by some divine revelation of paradise. Though the glory has departed from some of his finest work, sadly damaged, by time here, there by damp or neglect, there is not a fragment, well authenticated, by his hand, which does not bear the stamp of the genuinely-inspired artist, as contrasted with that of the merely clever or well trained-painter. It was right that the commemoration of one whom his countrymen may well delight to honour, should be of this simple, joyous, refined, and elevated character, something to remain in the memory when more magnificent, noisier, and vaster national festivals are forgotten.

## BETWEEN TWO STOOLS.

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### PART I.

"WELL! Master Gilbert," said my friend John Barnard, as he threw a match into the grate in my sitting-room, and sank back in his chair, puffing complacently at a large Partaga, which he had just lighted, "Well! Master Gilbert, which is it to be, the lovely widow or the maiden fair? I don't want to be severe, but you reminded me of the proverbial ass between two bundles of hay—saving the fair ladies' presence!—as you sat between them at dinner just now. Mark my words, young man, Madame Welland has 'got her eagle eye' on you, she very plainly means to swoop down, and sacrifice you to the matrimonial happiness of one or other of her daughters; I don't think you'll make a very unwilling victim, Gilbert."

"It is easy for you to gibe and flout at me, Barnard," said I; "if you were in my place you would not talk in that light way; I wish you could be a little more sympathetic. See here! This is the trouble I am in. You know my infirmity—I never can, and I never could, make up my mind; even in the most trivial things I worry myself intensely; don't laugh, Jack, but I assure you, I dread my old landlady's daily visit with an awesome dread, and I lie awake in the mornings pondering dolefully as to the answer I shall give to her question, 'What would you please to take for dinner to-day, sir?' Why, even the very suit of clothes, of which this tattered and smoke-scented coat is the sole remaining relic, caused me an amount of shilly-shallying of which it is painful to think; I remember to this day how the fellows in the shop grinned at the time I took in deciding as to whether the colour was too light for a parson; but what is the use of talking about it, *you* know that it is just the same with me in everything. Now, Jack, it does not matter much what I wear, or have for dinner, or what I do in the thousand and one petty indecisions that worry me every day; but *this*, you know, is a serious matter, a very deep plunge, and, I confess, I hesitate before I take it; but I bore you, Jack, let us talk of something else."

"Not at all," said Barnard, "go on by all means. It's psychological, or biological, or whatever you call it; a regular study, don't you know; fire ahead, young man."

"Well," I went on, "if you are *sure* it doesn't bore you, it is a

melancholy comfort to open one's mind sometimes, so here goes. You know I came down here about six months ago, 'a pale young curate,' with a comfortable allowance and some expectations."

"Yes, you lucky young beggar, I know," said Barnard, "six hundred a year, and 'still there's more to follow.' Well, we can't all be born with fortunes in our breeches pockets."

"I hadn't been here long," I went on, "before most of the people called on me, and as soon as I had returned these calls a whole flood of invitations poured in upon me. Mind you, Barnard, I am not conceited, and I am quite aware that it is my father's well-known what you call 'brassiness' which has procured me the elegant frame of 'At Home' cards, and so forth, you see round the mirror there. I soon knew a great number of people, as you know, for you have been out with me a good deal since you came down here."

"Yes," interrupted Barnard, "I *have*, young man, and I mourn over the reckless way in which you have induced me to wear out my solitary evening suit; but, no matter, tailors are a confiding race."

"I have often told you," I continued, "how anxious my worthy father is that the noble name of Gilbert should not die out, and how he is always saying, 'Time you should settle down, Charles. I should like to see you married,' and all that kind of thing. Of course, this makes a man think about it, you know, and I confess most eligible young women appear to me as possible Mrs. Gilberts. In fact, it is no use beating about the bush, I have quite made up my mind to marry."

"Hear! hear!" said Barnard, "here the honourable member sat down amidst considerable applause. Proceed, the plot thickens!"

"I *wish* you wouldn't take it so lightly," I said, "it is anything but a joke to me."

"All right, just hand me over that box of cigars, and I'll be as dumb as the Pyramids."

"As I was saying when you interrupted me," I went on severely, "I determined to marry, and as I looked about amongst my friends here, and thought over the folks round our place down in Devonshire, I found it to be by no means such an easy matter to 'suit myself,' to use the language of the kitchen. My abominable indecision always stepped in between me and the fair vision of domestic bliss; until, just four months ago, when I returned General Welland's call, and for the first time met his younger daughter Alice."

"Slow music! Tum, tum, tum-ti-tum," said the incorrigible Barnard, working his elbow and imitating the playing of a fiddle.

But I was too excited in my subject to stop; so, with an impatient gesture, I went on with my story. "It is of no use to tell you what an impression that fascinating girl made upon me, for you are as lacking in sentiment as a marble statue, it is



enough to say that I felt my hour was come, my mind made up at last, and I determined to do all in my power to win this lovely and charming girl for a life-companion. I had many opportunities of meeting her in this gay and festive place, for her people were quite in the forefront of society; and I need not tell you I let no chance slip by which could help me towards my object. At dinner parties I generally managed to sit beside her, and to monopolize a good deal of her conversation during the evening; at dances I secured her for a partner as many times as I decently could, I sang duets with her, I sedulously cultivated madame and the general, and I soon gained a footing of intimacy in the family."

"In short, for you're getting verbose, my boy, you were appointed tame cat in ordinary to Fairlawn. Cut it short, my lad, for it is verging towards that witching hour of night when churchyards and Barnards yawn," said my friend, suiting the action to the word in an exaggerated manner, and yawning extensively.

"All right," I said. "Just as I was screwing up my courage to proposing point, my abominable indecision of character stepped in, for Mrs. Lane, Alice's beautiful sister, appeared upon the scene, and to use your somewhat vulgar expression, 'knocked me completely out of time.' Oh, Jack! was there ever a more lovely woman? or more, what shall I say?—interesting; only twenty-two; a widow——"

"With no incumbrances," said Barnard.

"Pensive, the sweetest and the saddest smile," I went on. "What a mission, to a man of my romantic disposition, to soothe, and finally to bury, her grief, and to devote a lifetime to the happiness of one so sad and so lovely."

"Look out, Gilbert, you're dropping into poetry; I can't stand *that*. In fact, you know, and to sum it all up, you're as fickle as the wind, and you are trying to reconcile it to your conscience to throw over Alice and begin the 'same old game' with her sister. It's about the meanest thing I ever heard of——"

"Stop, Barnard; I assure you you wrong me, for (and this is what troubles me so intensely) I do *still* greatly admire Alice, and when I am with *her*, I could desire nothing better than to be with her always; and *yet*, when I am with Eva Lane, all the old doubt and uncertainty begin again." And I sighed heavily.

"Well, upon my word!" said Jack, "you are about the sweetest thing in parsons I ever came across in the course of a long and varied experience. Why, you're a regular Turk, sir! You don't mean to tell me you want to marry *both* the young women! It's awful!"

"Ah! You never *will* understand me, you're too matter-of-fact. You can't even conceive of the delicate gradations of feeling which torture me, and make existence one long burden."

"Delicate gradations be hanged," said Barnard, coarsely; "let's

go to bed. If I didn't know that you're not half a bad fellow at bottom, I am not sure that I wouldn't cut you."

"Well," I said resignedly, "I knew you wouldn't understand, and I am not in the least offended at your strong language. It has been a great relief to me to unbosom myself, and it was kind of you to hear me, though I wish you would be serious over it; but you can't, you know. Good-night, Jack."

"Well, good-night," returned Barnard, yawning again. "I am quite ready for the embrace of Murphy."

I think the conversation above reported has introduced me, Charles Gilbert, as a vacillating, and, if the truth must be told, somewhat fatuous and conceited young man. There was, however, something to be said in my excuse, for I was the only child of a doting father, a widower for many years, alas! and a very wealthy man, and from my earliest infancy I had been petted and flattered into an exalted idea of my own importance. I was a good-looking fellow enough, tall, fair, slight in build, and well-proportioned. I had entered the church, as too many men do now-a-days, not from any very high ideas, or from any very decided vocation, but because it seemed a "gentlemanly profession," and, after two or three very easy curacies, I had drifted to Southlands, a pleasant seaside town on the south coast. My vicar was a man of means, and of aristocratic connections, and he was glad to find in me an assistant able by his manners and his purse to hold his own in the rather exclusive circle of which he was the centre, and at the same time the genial and kindly spiritual director. There were but few poor folk in our district, and the work was of the lightest.

John Barnard was a man of a widely different sort. If I had the advantage of him in point of looks (for John was anything but good-looking) *he*, I must needs confess, had the advantage of me, in the far more important particular of brains. He, too, was an only son. His father, a man of good family, had begun life brilliantly as an officer in the Guards, and ended life obscurely, after a career of extravagance and dissipation, in the misery of slovenly suburban lodgings, a misery his, happily motherless, son had shared during his youth, and from which he was taken on his father's death by his mother's only brother. Barnard's uncle sent him to school, paid his expenses at an army "crammer's," and gave him a small allowance when John passed and entered a line regiment. Barnard never liked the army; the wretchedness of his boy-life, and the mean shifts, which his soul abhorred, and to which his father's debts and extravagance had reduced them both, had tinged his character with a certain cynicism which effectually put a bar between him and his brother officers, and made him extremely unpopular. There was, therefore, small sorrow on their part when his uncle's death gave him a competency, some four hundred a year, and an opportunity to leave a position which had always galled him. Jack had dearly loved his uncle, and had

mourned for him sincerely—in fact, the only times when I heard him speak perfectly naturally and seriously were those when he talked of the kindness and unselfishness of this uncle of his. I know now that Barnard's cynicism was but a veil to his real character, which was that of an honest, true, and unselfish man, although certainly at *one* time I thought very differently of him.

## PART II.

ABOUT a week after the conversation I have just chronicled, I was strolling gently along the pier to meet my friend Barnard; Barnard and I had parted company after lunch, I to visit a parishioner, and he to wander about at his own sweet will until the afternoon band-playing on the pier, which began at four o'clock, when he was to look out for me. It was a lovely day in July, the heat, which was extreme, was made bearable here by a refreshing breeze coming off the water, and at the same time breaking the surface of the sea into tiny wavelets, which glistened in the sunlight. The ubiquitous 'Arry with his coat off, his shirt sleeves rolled up above his elbow, and his face purple with his exertions, was braving a sunstroke, and performing extraordinary aquatic feats in gallant attempts to give 'Arriet a "ride on the water." A four-oar was just starting for practice from the boat-house under the pier, and further out the white sails of many yachts gleamed in the sun, as they passed and re-passed the pier-head. As I sauntered on to the pier, the dulcet strains of the band of Her Majesty's —th reached my ears, and, as the distance lessened, soon resolved themselves into one of Strauss's most dreamy and delicious waltzes. Now, I had not been idle during this last week, and I regret to say that looking back at matters after the lapse of time, I must own my conduct to have been reprehensible in the extreme to both Eva Lane and her sister Alice; I had been led by what I fear I must own to have been my fickleness, to say words it caused me a cold shiver even on that broiling day to recall, words which could not fail of raising serious expectations in the minds of *both* of the sisters. Alice was seventeen, five years younger than Mrs. Lane, who had lived in India with her parents, while Alice was being educated in England. They had therefore seen but little of each other until quite lately; moreover the two girls were utterly unlike in character, the widow being calm, quiet, and somewhat melancholy, whilst Alice was merry and bright, and not without a very keen sense of humour; there was, therefore, I imagined, but little of sympathy between them, and it was to this fond fancy of mine that I owed my carelessness as to the *fiasco* which must have taken place if they had been in the habit of exchanging confidences after the manner of most sisters. Arrived at the end of

the pier, I quickly recognized, among the many-coloured crowd, the portly form of Mrs. Welland, whose decided *embonpoint* no amount of scorching Indian sun had sufficed to diminish; nay, she averred that she had left England to marry the general, then Captain Welland, as slight in figure as her daughter, the fragile and delicate looking widow, a fact not without its significance to wooers, though I confess the possibilities thus hinted at by nature never struck *me*. Mrs. Welland affected something of an Eastern splendour in her attire; she had been a beauty in her youth, and was emulating the magnificence of the setting sun in her declining years; it was, therefore, very difficult *not* to recognize her; and, indeed, I soon caught sight of *all* my party, for Eva, Alice, and Barnard, and a young officer named Scarsdale, formed a group not very far from the band stand. They did not see me at first, and I had an opportunity to note their proceedings unobserved. Alice and Scarsdale appeared to be sparring amicably, indulging in such gay badinage as the scene and the folk around suggested, while John Barnard and Mrs. Lane were holding a conversation in which they both seemed very interested, she looking up into his face as she leant back in one of the pier chairs, and he leaning on the railing and looking down at her. I was very glad to see John, a professed misogynist, on such good terms with Eva, for I had *almost* made up my mind to take a decided step at last, and to offer her my hand, my heart, and my fortune, and I wanted my wife to like my friend, the only man I ever really cared for, and with whom I had had many a pleasant hour since I first made his acquaintance some six years ago. It was not long before John stood up and scanned the crowd, ever changing as the people promenaded up and down to the music; he was evidently looking for me, and I soon caught his eye, and made my way to him through the throng; however, he did not wait for me, for, raising his hat, he left Mrs. Lane, and came forward to meet me. As we drew near to each other, I could see that something had seriously annoyed him, for he was scowling with more than his usual ferocity.

"What on earth is the matter, Jack?" I said, as soon as we were within earshot. "You look like the stage ruffian, when he says, 'No matter-r-r-r—I will be r-r-r-revenged.'"

"Come here, Gilbert, I'm not in the humour for fooling," said John savagely, and he led the way to a comparatively secluded corner, at the end of the pier.

"What *is* the matter," I said, beginning to be alarmed; "has anything happened?"

"Matter enough," growled my friend. "I've stood a good deal of your nonsense, Gilbert, because I've got into the habit of liking you, and I don't easily alter my habits; but this last freak of yours is almost *too* much. Look here, after I left you I went down to the club, and as I was sitting in the verandah, outside

the smoking-room, some of the men were chattering inside; I was trying to read through their row, when I heard the word 'Welland,' and one of the men said"—and Jack hesitated—"no," said he, "you deserve it, and, by George, you shall have it! I heard one of the men say, 'That conceited young fool, Gilbert, is precious near hooked, I think. Old Mother Welland has been after him for months, and no one seems to know *now* which of the girls he's after; every one was talking about it last night at the Dimsdales'. What on earth any girl can see to like in that young ape, I can't imagine; I suppose it's the 'dibs' that does it. They say Papa Gilbert is a millionaire, made his money in soap, or tallow, or something.' Now, Gilbert, I don't care what they say about you, for you deserve it, though, by the way, don't you think you are making it a little hot for yourself; I don't care about *you*, but I *do* think it's a trifle *too* rough that two innocent girls should be talked about in that disgusting way; it's entirely your fault and you ought to be ashamed of yourself. I tell you plainly I won't stand it; if I were the general I'd refuse to receive you; you're carrying on this seesaw business too far, my boy; I shall pack up my traps and leave you, for I don't want to be dragged into the rows your nonsense will bring down on you."

I tried all I could to soothe down Jack's wrath. I told him all girls were talked about in much the same way. I appealed to his pity for my unfortunate indecision of character, but it was all in vain, he seemed seriously angry, *strangely* angry, for hitherto he had treated the whole affair, more or less, as a joke.

"Why can't you make up your mind, you idiot?" at last he said; "why can't you fix upon one of the girls, propose to her, be accepted, and settle the whole thing. You say you are wretched about it all, and you *do* look seedy. I don't care which it is, but get engaged to one or the other for mercy's sake, and I'll undertake to say, when once you have taken the step—and let me tell you, unless you *do* take it, you'll have to cut Southlands, for Southlands will certainly cut *you*)—when once you're settled, you will be so glad to have got rid of all this hesitation and worry, that you will be quite contented and happy with Mrs. Lane or Alice. Pah! It's *sickening*, man! for goodness' sake, don't make such an ass of yourself. *Do something*, anyhow."

Although I was dreadfully hurt at Jack's bitterness, yet, I am ashamed to say, I was at first rather pleased (most priggishly, I own) at the thought of being talked of in connection with *two* such lovely girls; but, as Jack went on, with the largest speech I ever heard from his lips, his evident anger and contempt gave me just the spur I wanted, and I said, with the full intention of carrying out my words:

"I am *not* such a fool as you are making me out, and I have quite determined to marry Mrs. Lane, if she will do me the honour to accept me.

"Oh!" said Jack, in a curious tone, "so it's to be Mrs. Lane, is it? Well, it's the only way in which you can repair the mischief you've done, and a precious fine way for you, you lucky young dog," he added, with a chuckle, "though I must say it's rather hard upon Alice."

"Poor girl," I said, with a sentimental sigh—(and it makes me *mad* to think what a fool I was). "Poor girl, she is but a child, and she will soon get over it."

What on earth Barnard was grinning at, I couldn't make out, but he certainly did grin when I said that.

"Why don't you finish the whole affair at once?" said he. "There's nothing like striking while the iron's hot. Propose to her to-night; the Begum"—(for so he called Mrs. Welland)—has just asked me if we would dine at Fairlawn this evening, and as I knew you weren't going anywhere else I accepted; do it, to-night, my boy, for if you wait till to-morrow, upon my word, I believe you will turn round again; you're a regular weathercock, you know."

"Jack," said I solemnly, and grasping his hand, "I *will*; I'll take your advice, and do it this very night. But, I say, Jack, I'm dreadfully upset, you know, at all this, it is so sudden, you know; I—I don't think I can face them now; make some excuse for me, old man, say it's the heat or something, and I'll just go home and compose myself; you know it's an awful ordeal; supposing she refuses me, eh?" I said with a confident smile.

"Oh! tell that to the marines, Master Gilbert; a nice-looking fellow like you, accomplished, and all that sort of thing, and pelf, sir, pelf in plenty."

"Well," I said with a humility, I regret to say, I was far from feeling, "she *might* refuse me after all."

Just then the band struck up again, and John went back to the ladies, while I went off to my lodgings to think over what I should say to Mrs. Lane, and how I should say it.

### PART III.

FAIRLAWN was a very good specimen of the British "desirable villa residence standing in its own grounds." There was the usual sweep of gravel up to the front door, the usual verandah on to which the drawing-room opened, the usual trimly-kept lawn; in point of fact, as the advertisement said, it was "replete with every comfort." Here General Welland had pitched his moving tent for a while, and hither John Barnard and I wended our way on that fatal evening in July. Jack seemed rather astonished to find me in the same frame of mind as I was when he left me on the pier, and this piqued me considerably, and made me still more determined to put my fortune to the test, and show him that, at last, I *had* made up my mind.



"Unconscious of their doom, the little victims play," said Jack jocularly, as we stood in the porch waiting to be admitted. "How do you feel *now*, my boy?" added he.

"You *might* be serious *now*, Jack," I said rather huffily.

"I'll be as sad and serious as the midnight moping owl," said he, with the same curious smile I had noticed before.

In a few minutes the door was opened, we were relieved of our light overcoats and hats by the general's old soldier servant, and were ushered into the drawing-room, where we found the family awaiting our arrival to go into dinner.

"You're just in time," drawled the general, who was a long, languid individual, and had nothing of the British officer about him, except a certain preciseness of attire, evinced in the elegant cut of his clothes and the neatness and gloss of his boots.

"So glad you are able to come, Mr. Gilbert," said Mrs. Welland, "the heat is really too trying;" and Mrs. Lane and her pretty sister both sympathized with me as they shook hands, for Jack had told them I was unwell.

"I remember when we were stationed at —," continued Mrs. Welland.

"Dinner's on the table, ma'am," said James, throwing open the door, and most opportunely interrupting the Begum in one of her interminable, pointless, and wandering Indian experiences.

Whilst we were proceeding through a long and (to me at least) tedious meal—for the general was something of a gourmet—I caught Barnard two or three times looking at me with the same odd and amused smile, and this, added to the confused state of my mind, and my apprehensions as to what the evening would bring forth, made me, I am afraid, but a poor companion and quite warranted Mrs. Lane, who had taken my arm into dinner, in saying to me, in her low, sweet voice, and with a sympathetic look,

"I am afraid you really *are* unwell, Mr. Gilbert—you are so silent."

I muttered some words about heat and headache, thanked her with effusion for her sympathy, and made spasmodic attempts to join in the conversation, till Mrs. Welland rose and, followed by her two lovely daughters, retired to the drawing-room.

John Barnard and the general were soon so deeply engrossed in some discussion or another (as to *what* I have not the vaguest idea), that they did not notice my taciturnity, and left me to my own thoughts, which, indeed, were chaotic in the extreme. Should I *really* propose that night? Could not I wait a day or two longer? Was I really in love with Eva Lane? Didn't Alice look *lovely* in that white dress? What pretty hair she had? What on earth was Jack smiling at, in that odd way, at dinner and this afternoon? What a *fool* he would think me if I had to tell him I had determined to wait a little longer—here I determined

I would speak to-night. What on earth should I say? And I began a dozen different sentences, as—You must have remarked, dear—should I say Eva, or Mrs. Lane? You must have remarked my devotion—No, *that* would not do, because, very likely she had not remarked it, or—awful thought—she might think I was going to confide to her my passion for Alice! My brain was whirling with fragments of proposals, and I was getting absolutely muddled when the general after saying, "Have some more claret, Gilbert?" to which I replied politely in the negative, said, "Well, let us go into the drawing-room, it is abominably hot in here."

In the drawing-room Barnard went over to where Alice was sitting looking at the pictures in an illustrated paper, and after a few words with her, he turned round and said to the general,

"General, Miss Welland and I are thirsting for our revenge, you and Mrs. Welland beat us most shamefully last week. Mrs. Welland, are you prepared for a disastrous defeat?"

Both General and Mrs. Welland were enthusiastic whist-players, and either John or I had been accustomed on the many occasions when we either dined at Fairlawn, or dropped in, in the course of the evening, to take a hand, Alice joining in to make up the rubber, for Mrs. Lane abominated whist, and preferred either to work at some fancy work or other, and chat with Barnard if I were the whist victim, or to sing herself and accompany me if John had to ponder over the cards. I thought it was very kind of Jack to give me the opportunity this arrangement of his presented, for we usually had an amiable dispute as to which of us should be sacrificed at the whist-table as we strolled towards Fairlawn. I thought, therefore, it was considerate of him. The card-table was drawn out, the cards produced, and the four were soon fairly launched on their evening's career.

I felt wretchedly nervous, and I know I showed it, but I thought Mrs. Lane would put it down to my indisposition.

"You are not well enough to sing, Mr. Gilbert," said Mrs. Lane. "Would you mind giving me my work-basket there?" and she pointed to an elaborate arrangement of bronze basket-work, silk and tassels, on the table by my side.

"If I am not well enough to sing, I am longing for the soothing of your sweet voice, Mrs. Lane," I remarked, I fear, fatuously.

"I shall be very glad to sing for you," said she, rising and moving gracefully towards the piano, whither I followed her. The piano was placed in a smaller room, which was separated from the larger by heavy curtains, so that the music should not disturb the whist players. The obvious opportunity thus presented to me of accomplishing the design I had avowed to Barnard, caused me positively to tingle with excitement as the curtain fell behind me, and I found myself alone with the beautiful widow.

"What shall I sing?" she said, turning over some music rather listlessly.

I chose two of Tosti's prettiest love songs, which were amongst the music, and as her sweet notes thrilled through me, I felt more powerfully than ever I had felt it before how fortunate, how blessed would be my lot when I could (as I hoped I should in a very short time) call the lovely and pensive songstress my own, and charm into a more joyous strain the sad notes I was listening to.

After she had ended the last song, Mrs. Lane still kept her hands on the keys, and wandered off from the accompaniment into a dreamy improvisation, through which the refrain of the last song she had sung appeared again and again. She seemed to be entranced by the witching power of the melody, and I almost hoped she knew something of my love, and was thinking of *me*. I searched through the music to try and find some song which might prove an introduction to the delicate task before me, but mine is a bass voice, and I could find nothing in the general's *répertoire* but roaring ballads about storms and wolves and such like inappropriate matters. By the way, it has often struck me as being very odd that the sentimental department of music should be so entirely relegated to those who have the advantage of a tenor voice. The unfortunate love-sick possessor of a bass voice, who longs to express his tender sentiments through the touching medium of song, finds his range of choice exceedingly narrow; he can defy tyrants, he can apostrophize the flowing bowl, but he cannot celebrate in song the many charms of his mistress, or ask in melting notes her pity for the tortures he endures; the baritone, too, is scarcely more fortunate; for him is reserved the briny ocean order of minstrelsy; he revels in the loud "Yeo-ho!" the "Hilli-ho!" and professes in rolling measures his devotion to the sailor's life; even he has his faithful Nancy watching on the pier for Sailor Bill, but the poor bass must trust to other means to declare his passion and ingratiate himself with the fair object thereof. Seeing the impossibility of relieving my surcharged heart in *this* manner, and feeling hot and flushed with nervousness at the trial before me, I ventured to suggest that we should go into the garden until the call to tea should summon us to the drawing-room again. Mrs. Lane readily agreed, and saying she hoped the cool evening air would relieve my head, she left me for a few seconds, and soon reappeared with a soft shawl thrown loosely over her head and shoulders. A French window through which we passed gave on the lawn, and Eva was soon seated in a wicker chair under a large copper beech, whilst I leaned against the trunk. For some moments we were silent, looking down on the lights of the town beneath us, and the moving lights of the many yachts anchored off the pier; a faint afterglow was still lingering in the western sky, and the stars were beginning to

peer out here and there in the vast expanse of the heavens; the soft rustling of the leaves above us, and the intense quiet of the summer evening, soon had their accustomed effect, and I was gradually becoming tranquilized, and feeling less tumultuous and confused, when Mrs. Lane startled me with a heavy sigh, and sent my brain whirling again. Now one may sigh with infinite and full content, and one may sigh, alas! from excess of *misery*. I chose to take Mrs. Lane's sigh as belonging to the latter order of sighs, and seized with a sudden and irresistible desire to comfort her in what I imagined to be her loneliness and sorrow, I blurted out—"Dearest Mrs. Lane—dearest Eva, I cannot bear to hear you sigh so sadly; nay, listen to me, I *beg* of you. I long most ardently to soothe your sorrow. Ever since I first saw you, your sad face has haunted me. I love you with all my heart, and I ask nothing of Fate but that I may devote my life to your happiness. . . ." Here the horrified look on Mrs. Lane's face effectually stopped the fervid flow of my eloquence. She positively gasped for breath, and for a moment or two was speechless, staring at me as if I were mad. At last—"What!" said she, "can it be possible that you do not know our secret? Has not Jack—I mean Mr. Barnard—told you?"

Even *then*, no glimpse of the truth pierced through the mist of confusion in which Mrs. Lane's speech enwrapped me.

"No," I said confusedly, "what can it be? What secret?"

Mrs. Lane took her eyes from my face, and looking down on the grass, she said in a low, sweet voice, a voice full of content, "Surely, Mr. Barnard must have told his friend that he and I are engaged."

For a second or two I was dumb with astonishment, then—all the perfidy of Jack, the vile predicament he had placed me in, my injured feelings, my disappointed love, surged up in my heart, and I said, with concentrated bitterness and quite forgetting Mrs. Lane's presence, "I do not believe the world contains a meaner scoundrel than John Barnard."

"Sir!" said Mrs. Lane, recalling me to myself in a moment, and making me to feel a cold chill, by the iciness of her tone, "Sir!" you forget yourself; I will *not* stay here to be so insulted," and before I could gather my wits and stammer out an excuse, Mrs. Lane had left me, and I saw her graceful form moving rapidly across the lawn, and soon disappearing through the open window, which she closed softly after her. Left thus alone I stood for some minutes under the beech tree, a prey to the most conflicting emotions. Severely as I felt the wound in my heart which Mrs. Lane's words had so cruelly inflicted, I felt still more deeply the wound to my *Pride*, a wound I felt I owed to Barnard's falsehood and perfidy. I could scarcely realize it all. Could it be *true* that Eva and Barnard were engaged? What a *monster* the fellow must be: to push me on to a fate he knew was

awaiting me, to render me ridiculous in my own sight and in the sight of the Welland family. Oh, heavens! if this wretched story should get about? And as I became gradually more composed the whole horror of the affair crept upon me, and I saw what a sickening *fool* I had made of myself; I saw my conduct to Alice in its true light; I saw how Mrs. Lane would *despise* me when Alice told her of my attentions to *her*, I shuddered to remember the tender sayings I had confided to Alice's not unwilling ears, I heard John Barnard's cynical laugh over my discomfiture, I saw *all* my acquaintances either cutting me, or jeering, or smiling at my almost wicked folly, and I felt mad, mad with Mrs. Lane for letting me talk to her as I *had* talked during these last few weeks, mad with myself for my wretched fickleness, mad too, *now*, that I had lost Alice, and mad with rage against the malicious and perfidious Barnard, that he should possess the beautiful Mrs. Lane! Oh, *horrid* thought! and I was rushing off home, when, remembering I was hatless, I crept utterly crest-fallen round to the entrance hall, unperceived; I possessed myself of my light overcoat and hat, and as soon as I was off the Fairlawn demesne, I hurried home, determined to overwhelm Barnard with my scorn and contempt when he should put in his appearance. Arrived at my rooms, I wandered restlessly up and down, revolving my miserable position, and composing scathing speeches to hurl at Barnard's devoted head. An hour passed, and he was not come, and I was still perambulating the apartment, fulminating anathemas; half-an-hour more, and it was long past the usual hour of our return from Fairlawn. It struck me I might have been longer than I had thought under the tree alone, and John might have gone home before me, to escape the storm impending over him in the sanctity of his bed-chamber. "No," said I to myself, "you shall *not* escape; I will to-night tell you what I think of your abominable conduct to one you called your friend, and tomorrow you leave my house, never to darken my doors again." I was soon at Barnard's door and listening to hear whether he was in bed or no. No sound could I hear, and I called—Barnard!—no answer. I turned the handle of the door, the door was not locked, and I entered the room—it was empty. Propped against the looking-glass in a conspicuous manner was a letter; it was in Jack's handwriting and was addressed to me.

"Dear Gilbert," wrote Jack, "As I feel certain you will propose to Mrs. Lane to-night, and as I know what will follow, I have thought it best to remove my traps, and escape what I feel sure would be a stormy time. It is, however, right that you should be offered some explanation of this unfortunate affair. I met Mrs. Lane last Christmas, and stayed some weeks with her at the Scarsdales' place in Sussex (old Scarsdale was poor Lane's guardian). I fell in love with her, and was fortunate enough to

learn from her lips before we parted, that she was not indifferent to me; we thought it best to keep the matter a secret for the present, for Mrs. Welland has high views as to her daughter's future, and will, we know, make many objections.

"I wrote and asked you to take me in at Southlands, because I knew Mrs. Lane would be staying with her people, and I knew you were intimate with the Wellands; I knew, too, that you were paying very decided attentions to Alice Welland, and though I could not tell you of it, I was very glad to hope I should have you for a brother-in-law. Judge, then, my feelings when I found that you had deserted Alice and were making love to my *fiancée*. I would have told you the whole story, angry as I was, and have saved you all this humiliation, if it had not been for Alice. There is more character in that girl than you give her credit for. From what Mrs. Lane tells me, you must have given Alice every cause to believe you intended to propose to her; in fact, you almost *did* propose to her. She was naturally much incensed at your fickleness, and at what she chooses to regard as the insult you put upon her, by so openly transferring your attentions to her sister, and she easily persuaded Mrs. Lane (who, by the way, is a very gifted actress, and was much celebrated in India on that account) to help her towards the revenge which she now enjoys. It went much against the grain, but what could I do with two such lovely pleaders, one so dear to me? I was a little hurt by your fickleness too, and, in short, I was soon put into possession of the whole affair, and enlisted in the plot. Nothing is so easy as sinning, and I regret to say, I soon felt a kind of pleasure in the success of my acting. Everything has turned out exactly as we planned it, and you are now bearing a punishment, which, you will confess yourself in a calmer mood, you richly deserve. You will not be so angry with us as time goes on, and I hope some day we shall all be friends again.

"I am, yours sincerely,

"JOHN BARNARD."

I had but little sleep that night, and indeed for many nights I tossed helplessly in my bed bewailing my folly and my discomfiture. For three days I kept to my rooms, pleading indisposition to the vicar. On the second day he came to see me, and something in his manner, a kind of suppressed amusement, told me that he knew, at any rate, *something* of my painful story. And when I ventured out at last there was no room for doubt; I could see the same amused look on *some* of the faces I met, and on others a still more unpleasant look, a look savouring indeed slightly of disgust. It was very evident that the vindictive Alice was determined to enjoy her revenge to the utmost, and to that end had confided the story of my discomfiture to all her *chères amies*. What could I do? I had not the courage to "face it



out" and "live it down," and I could not stay at Southlands, feeling shame-faced and beaten. There was no help for it, and much as it went against the grain, I had to seek the vicar, frankly tell him of the circumstances, and ask his permission to resign my curacy and leave at once. The vicar was very good about it, although he *did* say he "hoped it would be a lesson to me," and spoke of the doubtful advantage of having "two strings to one's bow." I need not say I avoided Fairlawn; indeed, I scarcely had the heart to bid farewell to any of my friends, and I left Southlands with a considerably less exalted idea of the importance of Charles Gilbert than the idea that young gentleman held when he entered the place of his humiliation. After staying at my father's for a week or two, I told him what a fool I had been, and he remarked that my two fair friends were "impertinent minxes," such is the partiality of parents! After staying at home I wandered about Switzerland till the autumn. On my return, with my various wounds almost healed, I accepted a curacy in one of our large midland manufacturing towns, where I am now. There is small time for fooling *here*. The work is hard, and I believe I am the better for it. John soon won over the Begum. He and Mrs. Lane are to be united in holy matrimony in a short time. I have forgiven him his wholesome and fatal blow to my conceit; we are friends again, and I have long since ceased to shudder at the remembrance of those days when Between Two Stools (again saving the fair ladies' presence!) I fell to the ground.

GEORGE LAMBERT.

## YEARLING SALES.

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THE yearling sales that take place at Newmarket during the July meeting are some of the most interesting events that occur there, in fact, the interest may be said to be universal; in the Paddock representatives of every rank and profession may be seen, from dukes and peeresses down to those nondescript hangers-on about racing stables, who always appear to me to be some of the most degraded of the human race. Men of all professions are here: judges, lawyers, merchants, doctors, even the Church is represented. The medley is an amusing one. During the last July meeting, at one of the sales, I saw sitting together in a wagon placed for the accommodation of bidders, a duke, a notorious Jew "fence" from Houndsditch, a well-known member of the Jockey Club, and a one-eyed ex-pugilist.

When the sale actually commences, and the first lot comes in, a dense circle is formed all round the ring; close up to Mr. Tattersall's box stand a knot of trainers, men acquainted with the history of the sire and dam of every yearling brought in, and able to judge pretty correctly their possible or probable future achievements; the booth at the back is full of race-horse owners, and standing everywhere all round are men on the look-out for a bargain. In one part you see a group of foreigners, who bid with great earnestness, but as a rule will not give high prices; if a lot is knocked down to them, their delight is great and the way they gesticulate, bow, shake hands and congratulate one another is very amusing; it is only, I cannot help thinking, out of deference to our national prejudices that they refrain from embracing. At another point may be noticed a lot of youngsters dressed in the most correct sporting costume, who affect the most thorough knowledge of young stock, and usually manage to bring themselves to grief before the sale is over.

The wagons outside are pretty full, and nearly opposite Mr. Tattersall, in a conspicuous place, sits a well-known and astute captain, keenly criticizing the different lots, thoroughly knowing their value, and rarely making a bid unless determined to buy; behind him usually sits his last new alumnus, his face quite a kaleidoscope, as the remembrance of the last "certainty" which did not come off flashes across his memory, and he occasionally wonders whether he shall ever recoup himself for the outlay he is now making in horse-flesh by his mentor's direction.

I suppose the lots just brought out are either not the choicest, or people have not determined what they are inclined to give, or have not discovered what the state of the market is, for there is usually considerable difficulty in starting them; constantly Mr. Tattersall has to say, "Well, gentlemen, if no one else will give anything, I will give £20 for this one," which usually has the effect of starting the bidding. This, however, is as a rule very languid, and Mr. Tattersall has to beg that he may not be allowed to overlook a bid, but at length down comes the hammer, followed by "Yours, sir," and to one of the servants in the ring, "Just ask that gentleman his name," which has the effect of drawing all eyes on to the purchaser, who turns out to be one of our young sporting friends, who gave a bid as a show-off "just to help the thing on; Colt sure to run up to a thousand;" he does not wait for the man to come and ask his name, apparently not caring to have it shouted across the ring, but walks round to Mr. Tattersall's box, with an expression of chagrin on his face, which he vainly attempts to conceal by a rather swaggering demeanour; his confusion is greatly added to when on reaching Mr. Tattersall's box, and giving his name, that gentleman regards him with that peculiar, calm, penetrating glance that he gives on such occasions, and the youth returns to his friends with a remarkably foolish look, having the conviction forced on him that he has saddled himself with a veritable equine Frankenstein.

Once at a stud sale I saw one of these infatuated youths, annoyed at the titters that went round the ring on his having a lot knocked down to him, defiantly bid for several others, and having some more knocked down, was ironically complimented by the auctioneer on the breeding stud he was forming, which "at all events had the merit of being cheap," the lots being two brood mares about twenty years old and a weedy yearling which would never be worth his shoes; the subsequent interview of that youth with his parents or guardians could not have been a pleasant one I should think.

At no time is Mr. Tattersall's tact so admirably shown as when he has some unfashionably-bred or not very first-class yearlings to dispose of; his judicious praise and manner of directing attention to all their good points is wonderful; in fact, a friend of mine who owns a large racing stud, says he is afraid to go near the ring unless there is a first-rate lot of yearlings in, so certainly does this St. Chrysostom of auctioneers manage to saddle him with some animal he had not the least intention of buying.

When the prime lots enter the scene is very different; instead of bids almost having to be begged for they come from everywhere, and you often hear £350 bid in three places at once from the auctioneer; at length the competitors drop off one by one, until it becomes a *duel à la mort*, but shortly a pause comes,

followed by the fall of the hammer and the inscription of the victor's name in the book.

After one exciting competition for a fine yearling, I said to a respectable-looking man standing by me at the ring who looked like a stud groom, "That was sharp work." "Ah, sir," he replied, "you would not have thought much of that in the old days, when the poor Marquis was alive to see him and the t'other gent (I don't mind his name now) a-bidding against one another, right out loud; one had scarcely got '300, as one may say, out before the t'other had another 50 down his throat; they seemed to care no more for thousands than gents do now for twenties."

One thing at these sales puzzles outsiders very much, which is, that you often see two yearlings apparently possessing the same quality and equally good points, yet whilst one fetches four figures, the other only runs a little way into the hundreds, the secret being that one has what is termed a fashionable pedigree, and the other has not.

A striking instance of this was afforded at one of the last yearling sales: a capital lot were sent up from a private breeder, and two of these were almost the finest colts I ever saw; one in particular struck me as being about as good a youngster as could be; there appeared to be everything to recommend him, great size, bone and length, and wonderful freedom of action; the other also very handsomè, but not to be compared in appearance to the first; both had exactly the same racing engagements. When the last-named came into the ring it was speedily run up to 1,000 guineas; I, of course, thought the other would fetch considerably more, but to my great surprise, it only fetched 230 guineas; the fact being that one was fashionably bred and the other, though far superior in racing points, was not. It will be interesting to watch the career of these two, as comparatively few of the very high-priced yearlings have ever been very successful on the turf, although there have been some brilliant exceptions during the past season, notably, *Saraband* and the *Bard*.

It will be curious to follow out the performances of the different lots of yearlings sold this last July; the *Leybourne Grange* lot averaging 174 guineas; the *Pound Stud* and the *Wimple Stud*, 325 guineas; *Park Paddocks*, 410 guineas; *Iwerne Minster*, 516 guineas; and the *Blankney* actually averaging 1,630 guineas. If these last make a profit for their owners it will be wonderful, whilst it would not be surprising for the yearlings with the lowest average to beat their high-priced rivals; *Hopscotch* costing 30 guineas, *Florence* 25 guineas and *St. Gatien* without a bidder at 100 guineas, are very forcible examples of this idea. In addition to these there is a filly now showing wonderful form; indeed the Northern trainers vow she is one of the best mares ever trained, her success has been wonderful; yet a well-known and most successful breeder gave it as his opinion only the other day, that

at a stud sale, as a yearling, he doubted if 20 guineas would have been bid for her, so very unfashionably was she bred. After the yearling sales are over you constantly find a stud sale on, and this often furnishes a most striking comment on the prices just given at the first-named auction, horses that as yearlings brought four figures now going for a tenth of their former price. There is always, however, a marked difference between the sums given for horses from a well-known stable and those offered for racers which have come from one formed, apparently, with no other idea but that of having the highest-priced yearlings that were ever known. It is very curious to notice how certain peculiarities of colour, shape and action constantly reproduce themselves in blood stock; the "tenth transmitter of a foolish face" is by no means confined to the human race; repeatedly you see a youngster come into the ring and feel rather puzzled by your apparent recognition of it, the fact being that very probably you know an ancestor of the colt's and his distinguishing marks are perfectly reproduced in his descendant.

The white leg of Orlando, the blaze face of Blair Athol, the curiously cut-up mouth of Skirmisher, which made him and through him his children and grandchildren look as if they had a little cross of an Alligator in them, frequently show themselves; as does in a most marked manner the white hind fetlock with the oddly-shaped black blotches on it point out the Irish Birdcatcher blood. Besides this, temper, action and habits seem to be hereditary; the Irish Birdcatchers, invariably, I think I may say, kick; the descendants of West Australian have his action exactly, lumbering along in their slow paces as if they were almost broken down, but at speed going with the lightest, quickest action possible. A rather curious instance of this last came under my own notice not very long ago. I was watching some steeple-chasers being trained over fences, and noticed one of them, a very fine, dark bay, who seemed to rush at his fences very much and carried his head very low, but never, that I noticed, made any mistake at them; on remarking this to the trainer, he said: "That horse always will go in that form, and if you try to prevent him he'll turn rusty at once; but let him go as he likes, he will clear anything and never make a mistake." As something about the horse struck me, I asked to see him closely, and on his being brought up saw a great likeness to a celebrated steeple-chase mare that I once owned, and on inquiring into the horse's pedigree found he was descended from her; and she used to go in precisely the same form, appearing to rush at her fences in the same rash way, carrying her head very low and mouth open exactly as her grandson did, but never made a mistake at her fences: whatever the pace was she seemed able to discover which side the ditch was and scarcely ever came down.

Looking at the number of yearling sales and the quantity bred,

one is apt at first to be puzzled as to what can become of all the youngsters, but when you think of the numbers of race meetings that take place now and the constant increase of courses, new ones being continually planned and made, it is evident that the greater part pursue their legitimate business; some that are not good enough for flat racing develope into steeple-chasers and hurdle-racers, and as to the last-named sport, the most unlikely-looking animals possible often turn out brilliant performers; others not quite fast enough for the turf, but with good bone become first-class hunters, for a racer, though slow for the turf, is usually very fast across country; these always bring long prices. As for the shires you must have blood, and the better it is the better for the rider: there is no greater treat than a brilliant burst across grass with a good thoroughbred under you. Again, some who do not grow out sufficiently, turn into ladies' hacks and pairs for victorias; others have the misfortune to fall into the hands of riding masters at sea-side watering places, and these poor things are objects of pity, ridden in the season all day long, by every kind of bad rider and by no means over well fed. The stories one reads in "goody-goody" books of selling racers for cab and omnibus horses, as instances of the wickedness and depravity of racing men are, of course, simple humbug; an omnibus proprietor would be rather astonished at being offered a cast-off racer for his purposes, and the most ignorant and credulous man going would scarcely believe that any of the horses he sees in cabs, either hansoms or growlers, could be thoroughbred, independently of the fact that no racer that had bone or weight enough for such work would ever be parted with at a price that a cab-owner would be willing to give.

Cruelty is not a charge that can be brought against owners or trainers of racers; any lad or helper in the stables who ill-treated his charge would speedily find himself minus place and character, if for no other reason than that cruelty does not pay.

English gentlemen do not neglect animals that have done them good service or ministered to their pleasure; as a rule they either spend a comfortable age as pensioners, or a merciful bullet ends their career.

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## OXFORD MEMORIES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TWENTY YEARS IN THE CHURCH,"  
"AGONY POINT," &C.

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AS to college discipline, it is not very difficult for the college authorities to form an opinion of the character of men, whether idle and throwing time away, or whether they are sensibly availing themselves of academical advantages.

First of all they know the "set" the men have joined. The boating set in more colleges than one used to have a bad name, as if rowing and *row-ing* were too nearly allied. My old friend, Carter, of Exeter College, had some difficulty in obtaining the college testimonials, then essential for ordination, chiefly because he was associated with men known to be of by no means a correct character. Men are weighed and considered individually by the tutors over their wine in the Common room. Few men come up to Oxford quite as strangers; either they or their families are commonly known to one at least of the tutors, as every college has its own connexion.

The Common room conversation is often of this kind: One says—"I am sorry to see Jones has joined Belton's set; his father is anxious about him, and this is a step in the wrong direction." "Yes," says the Dean, "he began by attending morning chapel—no man can be very irregular in his habits while he is up and looks fresh in the morning. Besides, he is in my Gate bill always about the same hour—eleven o'clock." "Then he will soon be known to the proctor," says another, while, perhaps, his tutor adds the further information that Jones is less prepared for his lecture than he used to be, and thus the general conclusion is that Jones's career is very unpromising, and that he is on the road to the bad. Add to this, perhaps duns beset his door; that is known from the scouts. Some tutors make the scouts virtually spies on the men—a class of spies for whom we used to be by no means on our guard, presuming from the fees and perquisites they received from us that they were quite on our side, though we little considered that scouts had known and received equal indulgences from the said dons for some ten years or more before our time, and were likely to be far more in their interest than in ours.

My old friend, Joe Wilkinson, had probably been summed up in this way, "especially as his father had requested particular attention

to his son's career." Joe's irregularities and noisy parties in rooms had, at length, become too common to be passed over. So one day the scout came with the usual polite message, "Mr. Short's compliments, and would wish to speak with you at twelve o'clock." Joe came to me and said, "There is a row about something. I am afraid the proctor has been splitting about that affair down in St. Clement's. Just lend me your gown, mine is so tattered and torn, the very look of it proclaims a row-ing man, as the old president told the Count when he snatched his cap from his hand and made a rattle of the broken board." Having put on a decent appearance Joe presented himself to the vice-president.

"Mr. Wilkinson," said Mr. Short, "I had rather at all times prevent mischief than punish it. How often have you missed lecture this term?"

"Only twice, sir."

"Only twice, you say. And I suppose it is *only* more times than is creditable that you have missed chapel—that you have had noisy parties, and have knocked in late?"

"Not once after twelve o'clock, sir."

"Yes, but very often after half-past eleven, says the porter's book. Now I want to impress upon you that in every point you are trying college rules very hard; one step more in the same direction and all your misdoings put together—making up in number what, if anything, they want in excess—will be summed up before the President, in the Common room, and then"—here he relaxed, and said, with a good-natured smile—"you will have to retire into 'the bosom of your family,' and I know your father well enough to say a pretty warm reception that will be. Now, I have warned you. My old friend cannot afford to throw away money upon your education, and after all to see you form idle and dissipated habits worse than if you had never a college education at all. You may go now; but—take warning."

*Exit* Joe Wilkinson.

But all this did not avail. "When the wine is in the head the wit is out." Joe fell into the proctor's hands. The attendant on the proctors, called "the marshal," knew by sight nearly every man—certainly every row-ing man in Oxford. Men were much more keenly looked after than they suspected. The jealousy among thieves which betrays many a thief to the policeman is a principle equally powerful among the *pestes noctivagæ*, as a certain proctor denominated them, and no sooner does one record a preference than her rival puts the marshal on the track.

Without entering further into particulars, a proctor once made inquiries at college as to Joe's usual character. This inquiry revealed enough—though short of proof on which he himself could act—to make the dons meet in the Common room; and, after an examination—in which Joe could do nothing but keep silence, look sheepish and let judgment go by default—he was ordered to retire

and wait in his room, and soon received a billet in the form following:

"Mr. Wilkinson will leave college before twelve o'clock to-morrow, and not return till next term.

"Common Room, Nov. 5, 1835."

How far Joe Wilkinson was really affected by this sentence we will not say, but he contrived to put a good face on the matter and to conceal it from his friends. "Never say die," was his first words to me, for I soon followed the Common room servant who brought him the verdict. "I have got my walking ticket *et nullus error*, and no mistake." Phipps and Belton soon joined us. Phipps said: "What a lucky fellow Joe was, to be home just in time for a shot at the pheasants." Charlie said, "I happen to have a supper to-night to a select party, and Wilkinson being, 'as this document witnesseth,' most particularly select in manners and morals both, must join at nine o'clock." But first, a ride across country was proposed, so Wilkinson "was to be kept going and must not be down in the mouth," as the Count said, though more philosophically he might have said, "We must not give him time to think." So, by the help of frequent potations and an un-failing succession of "jolly companions, every one," Joe had little time seriously to realize his position: for eggflip, bishop and tobacco smoke displaced thought till the time of breaking up, when fatigue (for nothing exhausts more than a sustained struggle between a proud spirit and inward annoyance), we may suppose quickly brought another sedative in the form of sleep; but when Joe awoke next morning—and there is quite enough to account for his awaking somewhat early—surely he must have felt within him a brood of craving thoughts which seemed awake before him, and awaiting the moment when memory should arise, refreshed and rife, to minister to their gnawing appetites. Wilkinson, I freely admit, was a lad of a manly spirit, but being also flesh and blood like other men, he had no more power or control over those inward qualms and hollow sensations than he would have over a sick headache.

However, all this was for a time dispelled by breakfast; for once more a party was made, in compliment to Wilkinson, that his friends might have an opportunity of seeing him off and wishing him good-bye. And what did we all talk of? Not of the miseries of rustication, you may be sure, but rather of the sport he would be in time for; of his pike fishing, in which he delighted, in Itley lasher, and then the meets of fox hounds in his neighbourhood. As for parental displeasure, domestic ties, and family restraints, though there is no one, of course, who is insensible of their power, every man at college seems to think they would be understood by no one but himself, so that it was common to hear men speak of what they did at home, as if no one could presume

to control or contradict them, and as if each was completely master of his father's establishment.

After breakfast Wilkinson was escorted by the whole party, forming about three strings of four men each, walking arm-in-arm to the Angel, then a principal coach inn, opposite Queen's. Of course, the box seat was reserved for Joe; and as the coach started, his friends gave him three cheers, in which the coachmen, porters, and horsekeepers, who perfectly understood the sort of passenger they had taken up, made bold moderately to join.

This was one scene in the drama. Let me now describe another, for, while every hour was bringing Wilkinson nearer home, there was arising a domestic storm with all the conflicting elements of sorrow, anger, indignation, and amazement awaiting the return of the prodigal son, though, unlike the prodigal son in the Gospel, he not only spent his own portion of the family substance, but was in a fair way of wasting far more than his own in riotous living.

The Reverend James Wilkinson had no little himself to blame for the blow which that morning fell upon him, and no little shocked all the rest of the Wilkinson family.

Life is self-denial at almost every turn. It is a necessity which increases with our years: because our ties multiply, and "give as well as take" is the condition of all but Robinson Crusoe, before he found his man Friday, on the desert island. But, though life is self-denial, a boy's education—the supposed preparation for a life before him—is too often a training in selfishness and self-indulgence. The boys in a family commonly get everything; the girls come off second best. I have no stronger impression of Oxford life than a certain impression by no means pleasant of men leading a life of luxury out of all proportion to the economy of their families at home, or indeed to the economy to which they are likely to submit when thrown on their own resources. It is at Oxford as elsewhere: some have double the income of others, and consequently set the standard of expense, which the majority find it hard to follow; and I remember a writer in the "*Quarterly Review*," in reviewing Peter Priggings, was equally impressed by a recollection of men at college encroaching on the patrimony of their sisters at home, as well as their own, by their own selfish extravagance; and this selfishness such "Tom and Jerry" views of Oxford life as Peter Priggings the reviewer justly complained were but too well calculated to encourage.

Since wisdom in any form is rather a scarce commodity, perhaps we may least expect to find it, however much it may be wanted, in parents. Parents identify themselves with their sons, and are blinded, not only by affection but by self-love. Still, excuse these infirmities as we will, as we sow so we must reap. The natural consequences must follow, and parents must rue, either in feeling or in purse, the habits they have been weak enough to encourage. This we shall find duly exemplified in the case of the now

distracted father of our friend Joe. The Rev. W. Wilkinson, rector of Blankton, was well known to me; and first and last from him, his daughters, and his neighbours, I heard a sufficiently detailed account of the way the news of Joe's rustication was received at the rectory, and spread about the parish of Blankton.

If there is any one subject of which a father proud of his son's doings is likely to talk rather more than his friends like, it is the incessant topic of "my son." Parents are fond enough of talking of their own sons, but listen with far more jealousy than interest to the sayings and doings of the precocious progeny of others, though to the scrapes and failures of those sons they lend a ready ear. To hear that old So-and-So, who is always making such a boast and such a fool of his boy, has found at last that that boy is no better or wiser than other young scamps—this piece of news is greeted as nuts by all the rival parents in the neighbourhood. This jealousy especially prevailed in Blankton in regard to Mr. Wilkinson's son Joe.

Joe was a fine, spirited fellow, and a great favourite with both high and low all the country round. He was first in the Blankton Cricket Club, and, whether in rabbiting, riding, or fishing, he could take the shine out of nearly all the youths thereabouts, and, of course, he excited the jealousy of their papas and mammas. If there was a warren to be netted, a colony of rats to be ferreted, or even a pig to be killed, every farmer would gladly have notice given to Master Joseph.

Unfortunately men who take the lead at home cannot endure to play second at college, where all eminence but of a literary kind costs money; so the rector had more than once found that he had been encouraging habits for which he had to pay.

In this position of affairs, and when every letter with an Oxford postmark was enough to spoil the rector's appetite for his breakfast, there came one with a big seal, which was nervously cut open and read, rather to the terror of the wife and daughters, who, in the arched eyebrows and lengthened face of the reader, descried unutterable things.

"What does this mean?" exclaimed Mr. Wilkinson, throwing the letter down on the table. "Some mischief certainly. Joseph not to keep next term and lose this! Midnight uproar—waste of time—can't be passed over—as a bad example! Very sorry. Hope for amendment for the future. Sentence of rustication."

"Rustication! What's rustication?"

Joe had often spoken of men being "spun," and of "having a walking-ticket," but the word rustication was wholly new to Mr. Wilkinson, who had crept into orders without a university degree.

"Oh!" said one of the girls, who had just read a letter from Joe. "It is not much—nothing poor Joseph could help. Some men got tipsy in Joseph's party. He could not give up the names,

so the penalty has fallen on him. Poor Joe! I am sure he could not help it."

The father became very violent and furious. "Disgrace of some kind, that is very evident. The term lost too! More loss of time and money both! I wonder where my expenses and repeated anxieties about this boy are to end?"

*"Quicquid delirant reges plectuntur Achivi."*

In other words, when the father of the family is in a rage woe be to the poor mother and daughters. All their endeavours to explain or excuse Joseph from his own partial account served only to intensify the father's anger.

An angry man will pace the room. It is nature's alleviation for excitement of the brain. No wonder, therefore, that the father, after a very bad and rather a long quarter of an hour for himself and household, took his hat and sallied out.

He had not gone far before he met the squire, whose son was dull and heavy, and called steady, one of those youths who rarely go wrong, because there is no go in them at all. The rector was walking so fast, swaying his stick and otherwise giving vent to his peccant humours with such symptoms of agitation that the squire stood still, prepared for that kind of explosion for which his friend was rather noted in the parish. Well, out it came:

"I am altogether dumbfounded—a letter from Oxford this morning—from the vice-president of Trinity—my son's college—he has done something or other—something "refractory," I suppose, as they say at the workhouse. And—but do you know what rustic—rustication means?"

"Oh, yes," said the squire, inwardly chuckling at the opportunity of paying off his neighbour for setting up his own son over the sons of all the fathers in the parish. "I will explain it to you in a moment. Pray, how much does this term cost you?"

"Sixty or seventy pounds."

"Well, then, you will have to pay that over again, for this term counts for nothing. But take my advice. Go to the root of the matter. Rustication does not imply very correct behaviour, of course, and, while good ways are always cheap, bad ways, especially at college, are uncommonly expensive. Catcham the lawyer is your man. Set him to work, as Captain Passmore did the other day. Young Passmore—you heard of his scrape—confessed he might owe three hundred pounds, so Catcham provided for seven hundred, as a reasonable margin, and what do you think that boy's extravagance amounted to in unpaid debts?"

Mr. Wilkinson looked blank.

"Why, eleven hundred pounds, and a little over!"

Oh, Mr. Wilkinson; you committed a sad mistake indeed for a man who pretends to know the ways of this wicked world! You should never seek to ease your mind by letting your neighbours



know of your misfortunes. By the evening of that day every man, woman, and child in the parish of Blankton had added one new word to their vocabulary, and that new word was "rustication."

As to the Wilkinson household, I pitied them. "I never heard master talk so rough before," said the gardener; and the parlour-maid said it was "a heartache to see missus. What had Master Joseph done; surely he hadn't robbed anyone or took to stealing?" for this was the only kind of evil-doing very familiar to her mind.

"It must be bad—something very bad," was the general presumption. "Rustication was only another word for expulsion and disgrace and ruin for life."

It is evident, therefore, that both within doors and without anything but a pleasant reception awaited our poor friend Joe.

To return to Joe. After the excitement of his friendly parting, no doubt when left to himself and his own cool meditations on the top of the coach, there came reaction, and no very pleasant anticipations of what awaited him at home. Probably the nearer he drew to the end of his journey the more cigars he smoked, and the more he "liquored up" while changing horses. It is only of probabilities I can speak as to the state in which he found his father and all the family. Most likely his mother met him sadly and sorrowfully at the door, and then his sisters crept out into the passage. Perhaps his father did not come out to meet him at all, but remained sitting with his feet in the fender, and the back of his chair to the door. We may naturally suppose that there was a secret contest between them as to who should approach the all-engrossing subject first. Homer describes a gentleman who, when a guest paid him a visit, entertained him handsomely nine whole days, and did not speak a word about the special business till the tenth. Homer also specifies that they had plenty, but not variety—good ox-beef, and abundance of it, day after day, and fresh killed, too. They did not hang their beef, it seems, in those days, though we read of it salted for the sailors, for whom, by the way, an expression very like "old salts" was the characteristic term. I am afraid that Mr. Wilkinson and his son talked over the matter in hand a little sooner, but I pass on to more authentic history.

"If my father will be so absurd, and likes to persevere in being so silent and grumpy, it is not my fault. He can write to Isaac Williams, and he will, I am sure, repeat the same words with which he parted from me—that they did not mean to accuse me of anything disgraceful; but for those noisy parties they must hold the host answerable; and these disturbances had been so frequent that college discipline required an example."

When Isaac Williams so expressed himself, he was somewhat softened by an observation made by Joe to the effect that all he had to say about the sentence of the Common room was that he

wished it had been something to fall more directly on himself, and not of a kind to grieve and alarm his friends.

These good traits were never lost on so excellent a creature as was Isaac Williams.

"But it is no use talking, Joe; you don't understand matters. Will all this reasoning spare your father's pocket or his pride? What kind of return can he now expect in any improvement on your part for all the money he is spending on your supposed education. What has become of all his boasting of 'his boy at Trinity?' and how is he to stand the sneers of his jealous neighbours, Stanley, Wilton and Co.? And what an example to your younger brother. And what will all the parish say, who think it only a new-fangled term for expulsion? 'Why, expulsion in my day,' said one old gentleman, 'used to mean being flogged and turned out, so that a lad could not enter any profession and was considered disgraced and ruined for life.'"

Soon people began to ask who would officiate for Mr. Wilkinson the next Sunday. No one could imagine that their pastor could have the nerve to appear before his people for some weeks after so vital a stab to the respectability of his family.

While the younger brother was executing some little commission in the village, Mr. Wandle, who sells brooms, mops, starch, treacle, and something of all sorts, and is churchwarden besides, sounded Master Charles as to whether the report was true that he must qualify for the family living, "as people say that after this unlucky business Mr. Joseph can never take holy orders, though one would hope it was not so bad as that."

"These everlasting blunders"—such were the words in which poor Joe's indignation found vent—"and all this nonsense, as if anybody cared for the opinions of such a scrubby set of people as those of Blankton—is most disgusting. Why, the dons themselves, as my scout has whispered to me, have had row-ing parties, too, in their undergraduate days, and fallen into the proctor's hands, too. So what do I care for the opinion or verdict of a set of old, fusty dons in a Common room, as proud of their 'little brief authority' as if they were so many lord-chancellors."

Such were the daily and hourly outpourings of poor Joe—always vowing he did not care, but always with his back up, and feeling like a young Atlas, with the whole world—that is, the whole of the little world of Blankton—as a very heavy weight upon his shoulders. Oh, Joseph, Joseph! be patient, and submit to your punishment. All this exaggeration and scandal is part and parcel of it. Go where you will, you will find Blankton people to taunt, to gossip, to exaggerate, and to misrepresent.

The loss of a term may make a material difference to some men. After rustication I have known testimonials for holy orders refused or suspended, and every old Oxonian knows that no man is rusticated unless he is known to be generally leading a life wholly in-

consistent with that improvement which academical advantages should imply.

That "misfortunes do not come singly" is true indeed, in the sense that evil breaks out in more ways than one. If Joe was doing little good at college, he needs must have been doing some mischief, for man is a piece of machinery which must operate on something.

One morning a bill came in. The letter was hastily opened by the father before he saw it was directed to his son. It was a bill of forty pounds for Seckham's horse, staked and killed. Here was a blow indeed; for this was a bill which had before caused no little domestic disturbance, and for which Mr. Wilkinson had at last, after many reproofs on the one side and promises of amendment on the other, sent Joe the money to pay.

How could that possibly be explained? Difficult, indeed. First, because the father was in no mood to listen or to admit anything; and, secondly, because a roundabout story, however true, has so bad an appearance in the way of excuse that you may almost as well, for your credit's sake, let judgment go by default.

The truth was, Joe had sundry other pressing creditors. Seckham's claim for a horse accidentally killed would look best to the father. Joe asked and honestly intended to use the forty pounds for Seckham's claim, but when the money came to hand, others were so much more pressing and Seckham so obliging, that the forty pounds were soon frittered away to conciliate the other creditors, and Seckham's bill remained yet due. No doubt, in asking for the forty pounds and saying nothing of other debts, Joe left an impression that this forty-pound bill was the only difficulty. Very much like a *suppressio veri* and a *suggestio falsi* at the same time. Now it is impossible to vindicate Joe's conduct at the best; and every one who reads this sad story can award his own measure of extenuation. Joe had, like many others, quite principle enough for quiet times, but tempting the Devil to tempt him, he had drifted into a position in which, to spare his father's feelings as well as his own, he had forgotten that to tell only part of the truth may leave a man under the imputation of a falsehood. Here was another row at home. "His father would not listen to reason; what was worse, he would go talking about it till all the parish looked more askew at Joe than ever."

Just about this time, as a salutary diversion, Mr. Bradley, who had grown grey in college rooms, was on a visit near Blankton, and called and gave a little sensible advice to Mr. Wilkinson. "It is but too true," said he, "that every father accuses everybody's son of leading his own son astray. Still, it is so far true in your son's case, that I believe he would do very well but for the fast set he has joined. In twelve months nearly all of those men will have left; so, if time is no object, let Joe read with some poor curate hereabouts for a year. But he has been talking

to me, and the sooner you make this affair up with him the better. How was it that you did not know that when a youth at college asks for forty pounds, he owes perhaps twice that sum? Your forty pounds, it seems, he honestly paid away in debts, though not for this particular debt. Make allowance; you can't have—few, at least, can—sons arrived at the age of indiscretion at which they all come to, without the bother of them. If fathers will leave their sons, for two or three years together, in the management of as many hundreds as they before had pounds, and leave them without any check, inquiry, or guidance, they must expect to suffer for it. I will venture to say, Wilkinson, that with all your experience, last Christmas you found you had taken too sanguine a view of your own liabilities?"

Mr. Wilkinson looked guilty.

Let us change the scene.

Forty years had passed away, and the poor father and his troubles had passed away too. Joe, now bald-headed, had sent a son to Trinity. We talked and laughed over the past. "An old poacher makes the best gamekeeper," said Joe. "Remembering my long-suffering father, I acted on old Bradley's advice, and though I had some ties to pay, I kept my boy's expenses within bounds, and had not much to complain of.

Now let us sum up all the distinctive advantages of a University education—the influences for good, which I sensibly felt, not forgetting the influences for evil prevailing elsewhere, from which I was spared for three years of the most impressionable season of my life. Impressionable!—yes, most truly so. Horace, in his character of youth, says, "Like wax for taking evil impressions."

First of all, I was removed from my native town and its limited circle of youthful companions, amongst whom it was easy to stand first, and, most natural for my family as for myself, to think me better than I was. At Oxford the whole scene was changed. I felt one of many, and a very insignificant unit too. From the top of the class at home I felt conjured into a new school, to begin almost at the bottom; the change to me was wonderful. I was like "the new boy" at a school, to work my way up. I was last in choice of rooms, at the bottom of the freshmen's table in hall, and placed in the easiest lecture, yclept "The heavy Euripides. The whole surroundings were so different. Whoever saw so many men of about the same age brought together before! At once I was in a wider sphere. Everything, bad as well as good, I am sorry to confess, was on a larger scale. Without boasting of exceeding innocence, I was surprised to find what apt scholars from the school of vice, knowing "how to commit the oldest sins the newest kind of ways," could come together from the public schools. A freshman's set is generally the worst, as the better class of men at Oxford, as elsewhere, are guarded in making new acquaintances,

Eton, Harrow, Winchester, and Westminster having all large numbers, and the dregs of each being large in proportion. Any one who listened to their confessions would be prepared to learn henceforth what a strange menagerie, "clean beasts by twos and unclean beasts by sevens," was the wide world he was about to enter, if at least he here saw a fair sample of it.

How much better the worst part of public schools may be now, I cannot say. I am speaking, be it remembered, of my experience fifty years since, at which time, Stanley says, Arnold had no little vice to contend with at Rugby. In one place he says that Arnold could not look without painful feelings at a cluster of big boys over the fire together, fancying that he saw the very spirit of the evil one brooding among them.

But some one will say—Was this knowledge advantageous? There was at least so much compensation, that to know this world we must know all grades and classes, the nature of the evil to avoid as well as the good to ensue.

But such painful studies of character are limited. It was not long before I was able to leave these dregs of society to their own corruption, and to find no little of a pleasant and improving kind. In this society I soon observed that the standard of superiority at Oxford was very different from that of my father's social circle of older persons. Here there was no longer some Sir Wormwood Scrubs, or some brainless landlord of a thousand acres, or some other Golden Calf to claim our worship. It was no longer the money but the man. It was Roundell Palmer who had won the Ireland Scholarship and other prizes; Rickards and Thomas prizemen also; or, in another line, Gladstone, Lowe, or Sidney Herbert leading at the Union, Pelham and Copleston in their racing boats; or Wordsworth, Wright, and Popham on the cricket ground, or perhaps Crawley Bovey, then the best man at a steeplechase. Even idle men spoke with some fire of emulation of men who had in these ways done credit to their college, and few could look without respect to the scholars' table or refuse to acknowledge men thus proved superior to themselves. At once I began to feel smaller, very low down in this very large class, and that I must do a great deal if I ever hoped to rise in it. My proper place and rank in this new society was no longer to be mistaken. I sensibly felt, "These are no flatterers, but feelingly remind me what I am."

Nor was it long before a decided change took place in my estimation of my private school education and the comparative advantages of others. It happened that one day after lecture my old friend Joe Webster proposed a little reading together. Joe was one of Dr. Butler's scholars from Shrewsbury. This revealed to me early advantages of which I had never an idea. My time had been spent among third-rate scholars and dissipated among a number of so-called modern subjects, whereas Joe and his school-

fellows had been so taught classics that most of these subjects became easy, and took care of themselves. He soon detected my special deficiencies, scratched off from my list of subjects the least important, and set me reading with more interest and to some purpose.

Once more, and in the field of literature, my new world seemed bigger and myself smaller, and I was beginning to find my place in it. A great point is gained in education when you know what others know—what is really practicable and how high to aim with some chance of hitting your mark. For want of this self-knowledge we daily see men starting for prizes in this race of life with a chance that reminds one of Virgil's *Italiam fugientem*, or of old Mathews' cockney at the Epping Hunt calling for a one-and-sixpenny fare after the stag. Not long since I heard a clever, but self-taught, man propound in a lecture the most common-place decisions as new and original, all because he had never measured himself with others, as at college, and wholly mistook the standard of a literary audience.

To the same point of valuable self-knowledge and experience in men and manners all the little incidents and peculiar habits of college life generally tend.

About eight o'clock every day there was a very general assembling from every staircase, as if nearly all the college poured forth together, for morning chapel. Eight attendances a week were the rule, and most men preferred the morning service, as less likely to interrupt either the boating and the cricket in the summer, or the wine parties in the winter. After morning chapel we had a short lecture in hall either in Latin or in Divinity; and generally on coming out, "Send your commons to my room" was a friendly invitation to club our bread and butter for breakfast, your friend supplying the tea, coffee, and eggs, &c. There were also "breakfast coaches," where half-a-dozen men of congenial spirit supplied in some simple way the breakfast in turns. My breakfast coach once consisted of a national variety. There was Jones, from Wales; Pat Baker, from Ireland; Macgregor, from Scotland, and Westley, from the Land's End, with Charlie, before introduced to the reader.

Of course—as the saying that "man never continueth in one stay" is even more true and descriptive of college than of other life—these were in the course of my terms replaced by others; but this will suffice to show the varied experience and the collective advantages of college life—making a man, even in his early days, a citizen of the wide world instead of his ideas being limited to the latitude and longitude of the paternal parish alone, where, as in the proverb, "Home birds have home-spun ideas." The least consideration will show that the Keble College system of all meals in the common-hall, however economical, is by no means advantageous as to social influences.



The choice which college life affords of a large number of companions, whether for boating, cricket, or other amusements, evidently conduces to the same wide experience of men and manners. And as to classical studies, is there nothing in the very *genius loci*—in associations with the scenes of the studies of great men departed, and with the time-honoured institutions of the place? Is there nothing in the very name of Oxford? I ask this in the spirit of Charles Lamb, who said: "Is there nothing to conjure up a spirit in the name of Rome more than in the name of Romford?" Why do men agree in sending their sons to France or Germany for learning foreign languages? Surely they could find Frenchmen and Germans to converse with their sons at home. Very true. But experience shows that the result is different. There is something in this foreign atmosphere and associations which creates an interest and gives a stimulus which you miss at home. This is true of Oxford studies—true even if we regarded only the seclusion from domestic interruption. Old Dr. Symons, of Wadham—"Big Ben," or "Benjamin the ruler"—said to my friend Jeans when he spoke of long vacation studies, "Are there any women in your house?" "Yes, sir; my mother and three sisters." "Then I am afraid you won't read much. I don't believe in study when there are women in a house. No, no; you won't read much there."

With money at command, at home you may have Oxford tutors, but the result generally would not be the same. You would miss the emulation, and a certain contagion of interest in classical studies which prevails at Oxford, and which each recurring season keep present to the mind.

Every spring and autumn we have "Greats," and with these the constant talk of the more promising candidates and of the expected style of examination. The reading men went to listen in the schools, and returned full of the questions asked and the apt answers given, and sometimes the strange misconstruings of the candidates, of which last I remember one rather strange instance as from an Ireland scholar, who translated *malis ridentem alienis*, "laughing at his neighbour's misfortunes," not seeing that the long *a* in *malis* implied not misfortunes, but cheeks! There was always much emulation as to honours and classes among the men of different colleges, and always a question as to whether the Ireland scholar would come out in the first class, and in two instances, however, the Shrewsbury scholars proved notable failures. "No," said Mr. Short, "do not expect it. The system is bad with Dr. Butler's men; they make an early show with scholarships by the exercise of their memories, but they have never learnt to think, and therefore break down in the schools."

## THE CHILD'S FUTURE.

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SCENE: *A swing in a garden.* TIME: *Evening in July.*

WHEN I am grown-up, how splendid  
    'Twill be to be free all day :  
My lessons for ever ended,  
    And with no one to obey.

My children I'll never worry,  
    But their mischief I'll allow.  
If I could, the time I'd hurry :  
    I wish I were grown-up now !

I'll live upon cakes and honey,  
    And jars of jam will I eat,  
And I'll never waste my money  
    On bread, potatoes and meat.

And when I'm grown-up, like mother  
    I'll always be good and wise,  
We never will vex each other ;  
    Oh, why do they say time flies !

When the shadow onward creeping  
    On the dial's face I see,  
It seems that time must be sleeping,  
    Each day seem so long to me.

Swing, swing, I like to be swinging,  
    And the sun is shining so bright :  
There's nursie, my supper bringing !  
    When I'm big I'll sit up all night.

## THE OLD MAID'S PAST.

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SCENE: *An arm-chair by the fire.* TIME: *Evening in November.*

WHEN I was a child, how cheerful  
The world and its inmates seemed :  
My heart was never fearful,  
Nor of coming evil dreamed.

When I was a child, what flowers  
I grew in my garden-bed ;  
I counted all the hours  
Till my rose-bud should be red.

When I was a child, what stories  
I dreamed 'neath the apple-tree ;  
What wondrous coming glories  
E'en the clouds foretold to me.

When I was a child, how tender  
My heart and conscience were ;  
What answer can I render  
For spoiling ought so fair ?

Oh, days for ever departed !  
Oh, youth, and love, and bliss—  
Whence hath your vision started  
To vex my soul like this ?

How chilly it grows ! There's Willet  
Come with my negus and bread :  
Take care, girl ! do not spill it,  
And now I'll go to bed.

P. W. R.

## AD PLURES.

By F. BAYFORD HARRISON.

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IT has sometimes happened to an eminent man that he has been enabled to read his own obituary notice. The late Lord Clyde, for instance, being alive and in good health at the time, one morning took up his newspapers and read long accounts of his life and his death. Rumour had killed him the previous day, and already the vultures were at work, stripping off his skin, pulling him to pieces, picking his bones. A strange experience, no doubt, to read of oneself as already numbered with the dead, as already forming part of that great majority of whom we say, *they were*. We seldom during life hear the truth of ourselves; could we revisit the glimpses of the moon we must haunt printing offices, not churchyards, to learn what men thought of us. If we consult our epitaphs we shall be surprised to find how very good we were, or how very bad; how much beloved, or how much hated; or it may be we shall only be astonished at the mendacity of our survivors.

The author of the first epitaph with which I will adorn these pages was evidently of the opinion that it is not only the deceased who "lies here." I have not been able to discover any particulars of the life of Louis Berber, Bishop of Langres, or the date of his death; but it is recorded of him that he bequeathed a hundred crowns to be paid to whomsoever should compose the best epitaph on him. The following was written for the competition:

Ci-git un très-grand personnage,  
Qui fut d'illustre linéage,  
Qui posséda mille vertus,  
Qui ne trompa jamais, et qui fut toujours sage;  
Je n'en dirai pas davantage,  
Car c'est assez mentir pour cent écus.

Which I will take the liberty to translate thus:

Here lies a person great and good,  
Of lofty line and noble blood,  
Whose virtues all the nation owns;  
Always honest and always wise;  
Now I'll end my eulogies;  
Here are lies enough for a hundred crowns.

I do not know whether this epitaph gained the prize, but perhaps some may think that it deserved the money.

The writers of epitaphs occasionally seem to have doubts as to whether their performances will be regarded as truthful by future generations. In the church of Walton-on-Thames is a long laudatory inscription to the memory of Thomas Fitzgerald, Esq., postmaster of England, and to that of his daughter Frances. It is in verse, the grammar and metre are correct, and it is perhaps rather above the average style of such compositions. Then follow two lines evidently the work of another poet, for grammar, metre, rhyme and style are all of inferior quality :

Though future Times, or Malice will not credit,  
Present Truth subscribes to such was their great merit.  
1619.

Apparently this latter writer feared that what was Truth in the "present" year, 1619, would not be credited by "future times or malice;" he backs up the previous praises with an additional assurance that they were not overdone.

The old Thackerayan superstition that a mother-in-law was a monster, especially when she held that relation towards the husband, has pretty well died out. I suppose that it had not sprung into being in the early part of the seventeenth century, for, dated two years later than the last epitaph, I find this rather elaborate one,

In remembrance of a worthy  
Gentlewoman  
Her Sonn in Law and in Love  
hath framed this  
Epitaph.

If many vertues ever met in one  
It was in her that underlyes this stone,  
Who had no care to hoord up any Treasure,  
But as God sent, she spent, and in good measure:  
Yet had the Poore their Share, as had the rest.  
Those times then afforded not such another,  
Except a Daughter of the self-same Mother.  
In Life she happy was, in Death much blest,  
Heaven is the Haven where her Soul doth rest.  
Her names are not named of purpose to trye  
If Fame can for Shame let her Memory dye;  
Tho' Fame be to blame, one Name will appear  
To them that observe the Month and the Year.

She departed this Lyfe  
The 20 of July 1621.  
Etat: 90.

I confess that I am not sufficiently versed in the obituary of 1621 to be able to say with certainty who was the excellent old lady who died on the 20th of July, in the ninetieth year of her age. I fear "Fame is to blame" for not having preserved her name. The reader will not have failed to observe how in this, as in the preceding epitaph, some lines appear to have been added to the original couplets. Some one seems to have feared that the

author had not made his meaning clear, or had not done full justice to the deceased; the four concluding lines introduce a sudden change in metre and style.

If the style is the man there must have been some very odd men among those who have composed epitaphs. The following is quaint; it is in Oxted Church, Surrey:

Anne, 25 years wife of Ch: Hoskins.

Lett this  
Pattern of Piety,  
Mapp of Misery,  
Mirroure of Patience,  
Here rest.

I should think Charles Hoskins' conscience smote him, else why should his wife of twenty-five years be called a *Mapp of Misery*, and a *Mirroure of Patience*? Let her rest!

Of another wife I read as below; I do not know her name, but the widower is very emphatic as to dates:

Hymen blundered when 'twas done,  
1821  
Oft it thundered, so did you,  
1822  
Death kindly sundered you and me,  
1823.

As no locality is assigned to the last epitaph we will hope that it has never been inscribed above a grave. It is far pleasanter to turn to lines which the hand of affection has written above those who have gone before. We have already seen what has been done by a "son-in-law and in love;" here is a verse from Clevedon churchyard, Somersetshire:

We miss thee when the morning shines,  
We miss thee when the night returns,  
We miss thee here, we miss thee there,  
We miss thee, Mother, everywhere.

There is the ring of truth about those four lines, though they are terribly faulty in rhyme, and the *here, there, and everywhere* amounts almost to bathos. It is of Clevedon Church that Lord Tennyson says, in his "In Memoriam:"

By that broad water of the west  
There comes a glory on the walls;

and then, addressing his departed friend, he goes on, a few lines afterwards:

—in the dark church, like a ghost,  
Thy tablet glimmers to the dawn.

I do not know that Arthur Hallam's tablet records more than his name and age.



We will fly from south to north, and in the churchyard at Berwick we shall find this :

O silent grave, to thee I trust  
This sacred clod of lovely dust ;  
Keep it safely, silent tomb,  
Till a parent asks for room.

This also has a sound of reality about it ; " lovely " is a curious adjective applied to *dust* ; I fancy I see a fond father grieving at the loss of a fair young daughter. Indeed, I daresay we often smile at what has been penned with bitter tears. In Kensal Green Cemetery I find Juliana Bellafield thus bewailed :

Beneath this stone lies a sister dear,  
Beloved by all her friends sincere,  
Long-suffering, patient, affectionate and kind,  
She died regretted by those she left behind.

Not far from the stone which records this good sister in such halting verse, I note another in which a mother mourns for her son. I omitted to take down the young man's name, but the lines struck me as excellent in sentiment though peculiar in construction. I give them *literatim* :

The widow saw her son, her only son, lie dead,  
She felt now he was gone her hopes were fled ;  
Religion whispers, no, remember he  
Who solaced N A I N's widow looks on thee.

Parents bereaved of their children should not, as I think, grieve long or deeply ; there is nothing sad in the death of a child. The baby heart gains with little labour and little trouble that rest for which we strive during painful and careful lives of long, weary years. And if it is of such as these that the Kingdom of Heaven consists we must not even be sorry when they go softly to the place for which they are fitted by their Maker. Yet parents will grieve in spite of all that we can say ; they feel the lonely years which are coming to them, they see visions of what the children might have grown. No father or mother anticipates a life of pain, or crime, or shame for son or daughter ; the children of other people may grow up ugly, stupid, ill-tempered, earthly, sensual, devilish, but not *your* son, Mr. Smith, nor *your* daughter, Mr. Robinson. See what Mr. and Mrs. Woodhouse thought of their little ones, who died at the ages of four and one ; these children lie, also, at Kensal Green.

Genius and taste and talent gone,  
For ever tombed beneath this stone,  
Where, taming thought to parents' pride,  
Our much-loved babes sleep side by side.

The child aged four years may have been remarkably precocious, but I can hardly imagine it possible that at one year of age an infant

could already have shown "genius and taste and talent;" these qualities must surely have existed only in the "parents' pride" and their fond expectations. I like better the following, in the same cemetery, on William Wakefield, aged 8 :

' Twixt two inviting worlds he stood,  
And Heaven decreed the better good;  
He cast a transient smile on this,  
Then winged his cherub flight to bliss.

In Stanford Church the lines which I will next set down are in memory of a child who died at the age of two years :

As careful nurses to their bed do lay  
Their children which too long would wanton play,  
So to prevent all my evening crimes  
Nature, my nurse, laid me to bed betimes.

Here the writer seems to recognize the better part obtained, if not chosen, by the child, and the truth of the old pagan saying, *Whom the gods love die young.*

In Haslemere churchyard I came across some odd, though not beautiful, epitaphs. One is above the grave of Martha Woods, who died November 6, 1774 :

We shall all be laid  
Within a bed of clay,  
And never appear  
Until the Judgment Day;  
When at Christ's coming  
We must then arise,  
And then be judged  
At the Great Assize.

Another to the memory of Mary Overington, died September 6, 1780, strikes me as having been, like several others, the work of two hands. Surely the last four lines of the epitaph which I am about to rehearse, were added as a sort of rider to the first four lines :

Let friends forbear to mourn and weep  
Whilst sweetly in the Dust I sleep,  
And leave this toilsome World behind,  
A crown of glory for to find.  
The greatest glory you can have on Earth  
Is to live well and die a godly Death;  
On that alone your future joys depend;  
Let all that see my grave strive for that end.

From Berwick, too, I have received an epitaph in two parts. I daresay all my readers know the old verse which runs thus :

Life is a city with many a street,  
Death is the market where all men meet;  
If health were a thing that gold could buy,  
The poor could not live, and the rich would not die.

The Berwick poet faintly remembered those lines, and wrote thus :

If breath were made  
For every man to lay,  
The poor man could not live,  
The rich man would not die.

Not satisfied with his reminiscence of the ancient verse, he must needs tack on something further:

But life's a blessing, it can't be sold,  
The ransom is too high,  
Justice will never be bribed by gold  
That man may never die.

In the churchyard of Bembridge, that very charming village in the Isle of Wight, I found several epitaphs which I thought worth copying, though they have no great merit either of beauty or folly.

1. God my Redeemer lives  
And ever from the skies  
Looks down and watches all my dust  
Till He shall bid it rise.
2. Dangers stand thick thro' all the ground  
To push us to the Tomb;  
And fierce diseases wait around  
To hurry mortals home.

"Dangers standing thick thro' all the ground to push us to the tomb," conjures up a vision of horned animals ambushed in the quiet fields, or in the one little wood of Bembridge. But I do not gain any clear ideas from that epitaph.

3. On Ellen Chalcraft, July 9, 1868.

short was	my life
longer	my rest
god called	me home
for he thought	it best.

The strange way in which these lines are arranged and the absence of capitals makes it interesting.

4. 'Twas pale consumption gave the fatal blow,  
And laid my cherished hopes so low,  
No power could wrest the mighty hand of death  
Nor longer stay my fast expiring breath,  
And I had sunk in anguish and despair,  
But the good Shepherd made my soul his Care.

No doubt by *wrest* is meant *arrest*, but the correct word would not scan. Can it be that the same poet was employed by the people of Bembridge and by the people of Barnard Castle? It is a far cry from Hampshire to Durham. Here are some lines from Barnard Castle:

A pale consumption gave the fatal blow;  
 The stroke was certain tho' the effect was slow.  
 With lingering pain heaven saw me sore oppressed,  
 Pitied my sighs and kindly gave me rest.

I will now turn to what I may call professional epitaphs. Surely a sexton, if any man, deserves that a suitable inscription should be placed above his bones. In a village near Barnard Castle, George Cansfield, sexton, died in 1853, aged 56:

In office 37 years, had 3607 funerals.

No more he plies his dreary art,  
 "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust,"  
 Another now performs his part,  
 And he awaits in humble trust  
 The resurrection of the just.

I do not know who wrote the above, but they are simple and musical. More amusing are the lines, written it is said by a curate of the parish, on

Peter Isnell  
 (30 years clerk of this parish.)

He lived respected as a pious and a mirthful man.  
 And died on his way to church to assist at a wedding.  
 On the 31st day of March 1881,  
 aged 70 years.

The inhabitants of Crayford have raised this stone to his cheerful memory—  
 and as a tribute to his long and faithful services.

The Life of this Clerk was just threescore and ten,  
 Nearly half of which time he had sung out *Amen*;  
 In his youth he was married like other young men,  
 But his wife died one day so he chanted *Amen*;  
 A second he took—she departed—what then?  
 He married and buried a third with—*Amen*.  
 Thus his joys and his sorrows were *treble*—but then  
 His voice was deep *Bass* as he sang out *Amen*.  
 On the *Horn* he could blow as well as most men,  
 So his *Horn* was exalted in blowing *Amen*.  
 But he lost all his *wind*, after threescore and ten,  
 And here with three wives he waits till again  
 The trumpet shall rouse him to sing out *Amen*. }

The stone on which this inscription appears has been photographed, and from the photograph I have copied it. Thus I have verified it; but the next epitaph with which I shall favour the reader has eluded all my efforts to give it a local habitation. It appears in Mr. James Payn's novel, "*Thicker than Water*." In his story two ladies are rambling about a country churchyard and come upon a tombstone to the memory of:

SARAH DEMPSTER.

Here lies a poor woman who always was tired,  
 Who lived in a house where help was not hired;

Her last words on earth were: "Dear friends, I am going.  
 Where washing ain't done, nor sweeping, nor sewing;  
 But everything there is exact to my wishes,  
 For where they don't eat there's no washing up dishes.  
 I'll be where loud anthems will always be ringing,  
 But having no voice I'll get clear of the singing,  
 Don't mourn for me now, don't mourn for me never,  
 I'm going to do nothing for ever and ever."

One feels with what delight many a poor woman would hail the prospect of "doing nothing for ever." The wife of an ordinary labouring man spends her whole time in cooking, scouring, washing, mending; except on Sundays, and perhaps on Saturday nights, she never stirs outside her own dwelling. The proverbial mill horse, compared with her, leads an easy life, and the want of rest, want of change, want of colour, want of freshness, material and mental, always strike me as about the saddest wants in a working woman's life. Therefore we must not blame poor Sarah Dempster if "doing nothing for ever and ever" was her ideal of happiness in the future life. I was so much struck by the comical pathos of this epitaph that I wrote to Mr. Payn asking if it were a real one, and, if so, in what churchyard it was to be found. He very kindly replied to me that it is genuine, but he did not know whence it came, as he had copied it from the *Sheffield Independent*. I then wrote my queries to the editor of that journal; the proprietors, Messrs Leader and Son, thereupon took a great deal of trouble on my behalf, inserted my question in their correspondence column, and forwarded to me all the information which they received. This at length pointed out Bushey as the resting-place of the tired woman. I addressed a few lines to the rector, or vicar, of Bushey, Hertfordshire, asking him to be good enough to send a post-card just to say whether or not the epitaph under consideration is to be found in the burying-ground in his parish. But I received no reply from the reverend gentleman. Soon after writing the above I heard of the death of the Vicar of Bushey; I therefore suppose that serious illness prevented his answering my query. Here, then, this matter rests.

I shall now only add a few curiosities to amuse my readers. I know not whence the two next are taken; they have been told me by a friend, who does not vouch for their authenticity:

Hic jacet Plus;  
 Plus non est hic;  
 Plus et non plus;  
 Quomodo sic?

To which a translation is appended:

Here lies More;  
 More is not here;  
 More, yet no More;  
 Is not that queer?

It is. So is the following:

Here lies poor Roger Norton,  
Whose death untimely thus was brought on  
Taking his scythe his corn to mow off,  
The scythe it slipped, and cut his toe off;  
The toe, or rather what it grew to,  
An inflammation quickly flew to;  
The part then took to mortifying,  
And this was the cause of Roger's dying.

I am told that the next verse which I am about to insert here is in Farnham Church; but, I am sorry to say, I have not taken the trouble to verify it. I thing it is amusing and if *non è vero, è ben trovato*.

Who lies here? Who, do you think?  
Little Johnny Newmann. Give him to drink.  
What, drink for a dead man? ay, says I,  
For when he was a live man he was always a-dry.

Last, but not least curious, is an epitaph which was copied by a relative of mine from a stone in the churchyard of Virginia Water, in the year 1866; I suppose it is still there.

At the close of day when the shades of night had gathered round,  
I left my wife and children dear, on duty bound;  
Suddenly the pains of death I felt, and joined the Heavenly Host.  
Do not, my beloved Friends, of to-morrow boast.

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## SNOBTON SOCIETY.

*Pen-and-Ink Sketches.*

DRAWN BY MISS THERESA TOWNMOUSE, FOR THE BENEFIT OF HER  
FRIEND MISS GWENDOLINE COUNTRYMOUSE.

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### LETTER VIII.

*From Theresa Townmouse to Gwendoline Countrymouse.*

Snobton-by-the-Sea, — shire.

DEAREST GWEN,

In this letter—the last I shall write to you from here—I propose to fulfil the promise I made some time ago, and describe some of the senior clergy of Snobton.

Yes, dear, my exile is over; in a few days I return to town for a brief period, and then like the swallows I go southward to my beloved Riviera. I leave Snobton considerably the better in health, thanks to its balmy breezes; and during my stay I flatter myself that I have gained some insight into the manners and customs of the worthy people who form its society; so you see that I have profited both mentally and physically by my sojourn here. The study of the various grades of Snobton society has afforded me much amusement as well as some instruction. I have seen something of a phase of social life of which I was previously ignorant, so that I have really added to my stock of information. For my part I think it is always more interesting to study real flesh and blood men and women than it is to spend long and too often profitless hours in wading through novels which seldom rise above the ordinary circulating-library level of common-place vapidty.

Of course it is always a pleasure to make acquaintance with the men and women whom the magic pens of some of the great ones of the bright realms of fiction have created for our delight—men and women who seem as real as the living, breathing human beings we meet and like, or dislike, as the case may be, every day of our lives.

It is distinctly *not* a profitless expenditure of time to pass hours over the pages of Scott, or Thackeray, or Dickens, or, last but not least, George Eliot; or to make oneself familiar with the heroes and heroines of two or three living authors I could name—but I

need not enumerate them. I know your tastes are in harmony with mine, for have we not compared notes a hundred times under the shade of that big oak-tree on the Rectory lawn, the scene of so many of our friendly discussions and confabulations? and have we not always agreed to agree on the subject of books and book-writers? But the ordinary novels which fill the shelves of our circulating libraries—novels vapid, silly and too often bad in tone and tendency do no one any good, and at best can only serve to while away the weary hours which drag so heavily along for idle and therefore miserable women.

The best delineation of human character by the most skilful of writers, however, has not the same fascination, the same interest for me as the study at first hand of the men and women of real life. It is a thousand times more absorbing to watch the comedies and tragedies that go on around us—for there are tragic elements in what on the surface seem the most common-place lives—than to follow the plot of the most exciting novel man or woman ever penned. More real knowledge of human nature may be gained in as many days by people who care to study character than would be learnt in years from books, and from books alone.

The power of analyzing character is in a measure a natural gift, but like other gifts it must be cultivated or it will bear no fruit. It is a study that demands some thought and much observation; and, above all, the power of seeing people and things as they are, not as you wish or imagine them to be. You must not wear either green or rose-coloured spectacles, but look about you with clear, unprejudiced, but keen eyes, taking mental notes to be stored up in your memory and pondered over thoughtfully at the end of the day.

When the study of what may be termed "mental anatomy" has become a habit it is extraordinary what a new zest is given to existence; it becomes a sort of second nature to probe the hearts of the people with whom you may be brought in contact, and though there will be moments when you will feel disgusted with human nature—moments when you stand aghast at some transient glimpse behind a carefully worn mask; moments when meanness and spite and malice stand revealed in all their naked ugliness, when your eyes look down into depths of moral turpitude never suspected beneath a fair exterior; moments when you feel tempted to echo the heart-sick cry of the Preacher, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit," there will be other moments when some sudden gleam of generosity, of unselfishness, of kindness of heart—perhaps from a quarter where none of these qualities were thought to exist—will show that the dark cloud has a silver lining, and that human nature has its noble as well as its ignoble side; that a germ of good is latent in every heart; that though the good may be choked by the evil weeds of worldliness, avarice, and selfishness, yet it is there, ready to spring up

when the weeds are plucked up by the roots, ready to put forth shoots of promise for the future, shoots which may one day bud, and blossom and bear fruit.

Do you think this elegant metaphor is a plagiarism from the sermons of our Snobton divines? No, dear, the pulpit oratory of Snobton—with one brilliant exception—does not inspire me with a wish to garnish my letters to you with any flowers of rhetoric borrowed from that quarter, nor am I fond of echoing the opinions or the words of other people. When I sit down to write to you, I do so simply with the idea of telling you frankly what I think or feel and to chronicle the impressions I receive of people and places, not with the intention of inditing a formal epistle of the style you may read any day in that useful manual, "*The Art of Polite Letter Writing*," or modelled on the severely classic compositions of Mrs. Chapone. You, dear Gwen, call me impulsive and accuse me of want of caution in my speech. I write with the same frankness as I speak, knowing that you will neither misunderstand me, nor criticize my desultory scribbings too severely.

And now to sketch the portraits of some of the worthy clerics to whom the Church has confided the spiritual welfare of the inhabitants of Snobton.

The Reverend Onesimus Dulcimer is one of the least conventional of men and parsons. Unlike most of his cloth he does not live in constant fear of Mrs. Grundy or of what Mrs. Grundy will say. Holding strong opinions of his own, both political and religious—especially the latter—he openly and boldly avows them on all occasions. But though he is often in hot water—as people generally are who err on the side of outspokenness—the Reverend Onesimus is very popular with those who value honesty and sincerity more than that supple, agree-with-everybody suavity assumed by men and women who have not the courage of their opinions—invertebrate, unstable folk who have the chameleon-like power of changing, or of seeming to change, their views at a moment's notice.

I have seen many men in Snobton who have this Protean gift to perfection—men who will change their politics with marvellous celerity, if in doing so they can advance their own interests. To men of this stamp, no doubt, the Reverend Onesimus Dulcimer's staunch adherence to his political creed is a thing they neither admire nor wish to emulate. Consequently they are apt to be over-severe in judging him, to lay undue stress on his slight peculiarities of manner, make disparaging comments on his style of preaching and jeer at his hobbies—very innocent ones they are too—while they fail to appreciate many admirable traits of character that would atone for far greater faults than his.

Perhaps one of the reasons why the Reverend Onesimus is not appreciated as much as he ought to be is, because there is a strong

dash of originality in his composition, and you must know that originality in any shape or form is a heinous offence in the eyes of a large section of Snobton society. Let any one diverge ever so little out of the beaten track, let him venture to assert his right to think for himself on all subjects, let him omit to sacrifice to the great god Mammon, and—*c'est une affaire finie*: the unhappy one is pronounced "peculiar in his views," "unsound," or merely "odd." Eyebrows are lifted and shoulders shrugged when his name is mentioned, and those who know the offender only by sight or by name carry away the idea that the object of all this fine scorn must have been guilty of some grave offence against social decorum. This is one of the penalties all must pay who dare to do the thing and say the thing that seems to them right.

Now, though my own opinions on matters political are in direct opposition to those held by the Reverend Onesimus, I am quite ready and willing to admit that he may be right and I wrong—for there are always two sides to every question. He is a Radical of a somewhat advanced type, while I am a Tory—I love the good old word—but all the same I respect his loyalty to his party, admire his undoubted talents, and render my small tribute of homage to what is always worthy of reverence: a fine intellect and a kindly heart.

I need not enlarge on the religious views of the Reverend Onesimus. Enough that he keeps abreast with the age in liberality of opinion; that he is not shackled by the bondage of a cold and narrow creed; that he is not cramped by the bigoted prejudices of Evangelicalism, or the superstition and formalism of the Ritualists; he strikes the happy mean between these two extremes.

Snobton abounds in religious as well as in social coteries, and many people who have in a manner affiliated themselves to any of these religio-social cliques would die rather than enter the doors of the church where the Reverend Onesimus officiates. They would cut off their right hand rather than admire his sermons, though any one with a grain of intelligence must admit their excellence. No: they reserve their praise for the feeble twaddle of some stripling curate whose brains are about on a par with his oratorical powers. The young ladies who wax sentimental over the Reverend Melchisedec Fairweather's hyacinthine locks, who grow rhapsodical about his "beautiful" face, his fascinating manners, and his "sweet" voice, can see nothing to admire in the fine intellectual head, the keen eyes and the honest sincerity of speech, of a sober middle-aged man like Onesimus Dulcimer. Were he a bachelor, of course, that would alter the case, but a married man with grown-up sons and daughters!—why, of course, the dear girls can't fall into ecstasies over such a very prosaic individual as that, and, consequently the Reverend Melchisedec

and his congeners enjoy a monopoly of that semi-religious, semi-sentimental adoration which must be extremely gratifying to their masculine vanity.

The Reverend Gamaliel Birchington, another divine occupying a prominent position here, offers a striking contrast in appearance, manner and talent to the Reverend Onesimus Dulcimer. He is a large, fat, unctuous-looking individual, heavy of feature, rubicund of visage and noisy of voice; with somewhat unrefined and assertively "bumptious" manners. And yet with all these drawbacks he is a successful and a popular man.

Twenty years ago he came to Snobton as curate to the rector of a church in the most unfashionable part of the town. He had neither position nor wealth, and yet at the present moment he has acquired both. What the secret of his success is I cannot tell, for he is not brilliantly clever, or handsome, or well-born; perhaps under his noisy jollity of manner he conceals a greater amount of worldly wisdom than he is generally given credit for.

Certainly he is one of those fortunate individuals who are born lucky; prosperity has attended his steps at every important crisis of his career.

A couple of years after he came to Snobton, the Reverend Gamaliel made the acquaintance of the widow of a school-master, a clever managing woman, with a keen eye to what is vulgarly called "the main chance." The widow felt herself unable to cope with the numerous difficulties which beset a woman when placed in so trying a position as that of the head of a large boys' school, so when the Reverend Gamaliel pressed his suit, laying so to speak, his name and talents—fortune he had none—at her feet, she bethought herself that his name with the addition of the imposing letters M.A. would look well on the school prospectus; that his talents might be turned to advantage in extending her connection; that the reproach of poverty might be removed, and that their combined efforts might overcome any obstacles an adverse fate might place in their path.

Self-confidence is one of the most powerful levers by which such obstacles may be removed; and the Reverend Gamaliel and his wife have found most of the difficulties which first barred their way to success removed one by one. The school proved more remunerative than they ever hoped: Fortune's wheel spun merrily round; comparative wealth brought them social position; Mrs. Birchington was received—at first only on sufferance, but later on terms of equality in the best and most exclusive society, and the Reverend Gamaliel, through a marvellous piece of good luck, was appointed incumbent to a new church in the most select part of Snobton. Added to all this Lady Plutus was pleased to patronize them, and this was the crowning benefit kind Fortune conferred upon the worthy pair.

Parents had no hesitation in intrusting their children's

education to people who had the honour of Lady Plutus' acquaintance; there was not a single vacancy in the Reverend Gamaliel's "Preparatory school for young gentlemen," after his and his wife's name had appeared in the local paper in the list of guests at one of the Plutus Hall receptions. In gratitude for this honour, and perhaps in the hope of favours to come, the Birchingtons are among the most devoted of her ladyship's admirers; they never miss an opportunity of chanting those long litanies of adoration to the honour of the Golden Calf which fill the air of Snobton by day and by night—for to the Snobtonians Lady Plutus is the high priestess of that great deity, and such songs are supposed to be pleasing to her ears.

I sometimes wonder what the verdict of the world would be if all this adventitious glamour of wealth faded away and their idol stood forth for judgment just on her own merits. What flaws would be found in the tiara of charms and virtues that now encircles her brow!—what weaknesses would be discovered in a character now deemed faultless! That prince of courtiers and king of sycophants, who, when in the midst of one of his most eloquent sermons told his congregation that they must all die, and then bowing towards one royal listener added *presque tous*, did not sin more grievously against truth than do some of those who for ever hymn the virtues of those upon whom Mammon has smiled.

Think of the revulsion of feeling these sycophants would experience if Mammon no longer smiled, but frowned, if black misfortune came and sat by the fireside of these pampered favourites of fortune! Cold looks would take the place of smiles; chilling silence, or, worse still, open sneers would take the place of flattering words, for most people reverse Bolingbroke's noble dictum, "In their prosperity my friends shall never hear of me, in their adversity, always." There is nothing like loss of wealth for proving the genuineness of friendship. Poverty is the surest protection against flattery, so it has its compensations after all.

I don't wonder that millionaires are seldom happy. Unless they are blind to the meannesses of which the human parasites who cling around the rich are capable they must, at times, be distrustful of the whole human race; must be haunted with doubts of the sincerity and disinterestedness of their dearest friends; must be a prey to hundreds of fears of which their poorer brethren know nothing.

The Reverend Gamaliel Birchington and his wife are troubled by no such surmises as these. They see Lady Plutus as she is and not as she might be—see her prosperous, flattered, toadied; and they, too, pay her homage in the approved manner, with bowed heads and bended knees. She is their patroness, and they are her respectful and grateful admirers. If any little jealousy of



her superior wealth lurks in their bosoms they conceal it carefully from view ; and they eat their humble pie with seeming relish.

The Reverend Erasmus Crozier is a fair specimen of a clergyman of the old school—a school which, though not faultless, is worthy of much admiration and respect, for it produced men of chivalrous honour, of culture and of high principle—men who were gentlemen in the best sense of the word. The Reverend Erasmus Crozier is essentially a gentleman, and the species being scarce in Snobton, one values doubly the few that may be classed under that name.

In appearance he is really a “grand old man,” tall, erect, soldier-like in bearing, carrying the weight of his eighty years bravely ; with features that are handsome still, and manners of old-fashioned courtliness. In his youth the Reverend Erasmus could hold his own across country and handle a gun or a fishing-rod with the best ; and I don’t think any of these recreations unfitted him for the duties and work of a parson.

Why should not a clergyman join in any rational amusement that brings him in contact with his fellows ? Why should his black coat be a sort of kill-joy wherever he goes ? Why should he always wear a grave face and speak in measured tones ?

The Reverend Erasmus Crozier preaches good, solid sermons, carefully thought out, reasoned out, and *written* out too. He is wise enough not to indulge in any of the slipsbod, haphazard, so-called extemporary “discourses” some parsons are so addicted to. Surely a man can better arrange his ideas—can think and reason more clearly in the quietude of his study, than at the last moment as he faces his congregation from the pulpit. If he is of a nervous and excitable temperament the very strain of mind such an effort involves is so great that all coherence and continuity of thought must be destroyed ; consequently instead of a closely-reasoned and clearly-expressed sermon the congregation are treated to a rambling, confused, and too often wearisome string of commonplaces that leave no tangible food for thought behind, but which pass through the mind like water through a sieve—or to use a familiar phrase, “go in at one ear and out at the other.”

Of course there are some exceptional people who have the rare gift of eloquence, who carry their hearers with them, and are for the time being veritably inspired. I do not speak of these exceptional people ; in their way they are geniuses, and every one admits that a genius must not be judged by ordinary rules. I refer only to men of average talents—men who with care and thought can write a fair sermon but who lack the magic power of eloquence. If they are wise they will not court comparison with men who possess that indescribable something we call genius.

There, dear, is a little homily on sermons ; do not read it to your father, for it is intended for your eye alone. But I know I may trust you ; I know that when you have read my letters they

are speedily consigned to the flames, the bourn to which all letters should find their way when they have fulfilled their mission, for of all the melancholy things accumulations of old letters are the most melancholy.

I think I should never write to you again if I thought my lucubrations were left about to be read by prying or dishonourable persons, or, worse still, handed about from one friend to another, after the manner of those sententious epistles written with that very object in view by people travelling in "far and foreign lands"—epistles probably destined for publication "at the request of a large circle of friends," of course "at the author's expense."

I could, did time and space permit, sketch other members of Snobton society: men and women good, bad, and indifferent, but no doubt you will think my letter long enough, so I will reserve all further description of the good people I have seen here until we meet. After all, pen and ink are very poor substitutes for speech, so I may be better able to do justice to my subject some day when we are *tête-à-tête* in your pretty drawing-room, you working, I talking and toasting my feet on the fender.

But this cosy scene I have conjured up before my mind's eye looms, alas, far in the distance—many months must elapse before it can be realized. Never mind; it will be something for me to look forward to when long miles stretch between us, and who can say that anticipation of pleasure to come has not a peculiar charm of its own?

And now, dearest and best of friends, good-bye. Write to me often, and I will not fail to do the same wherever I may be.

Your always attached,  
THERESA TOWNMOUSE.

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## BISMARCKANA.

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WE flatter ourselves now-a-days, and philosophers support us in this flattery, that we are highly civilized: the notion of Moloch-worship appears to us as farcical; the cult of brute force a dead language. We should be shocked at the mere idea that it still existed among us. What then would our highly abstract and metaphysically-minded cousins, the Germans, say, if they were told that they themselves were guilty of such gross materialism, indeed that they are the greatest offenders in that line now extant in the civilized world? What, they? The nation of professors? They, whose heads are so high in the clouds, that they cannot look after their coats and hats, whose reasonings are so delicately abstruse that common folk cannot see them, whose sentences and ideas are so wonderfully involved, that one fears they will get lost in them, and never come out again.

Yet such is the fact. Force, it is true, is no longer worshipped under the semblance of Apis, nor when we hear thunder do we flatter it as an angry god. We are much too refined for that. No, it is adored, entreated, bowed down to, under no less cultured and majestic a form than that of Prince Bismarck, the Lord Chancellor; before whom, cap in hand, the whole Vaterland, "crooks the pregnant hinges of the knee." What does it matter that he has not actually been raised to the rank of a god? Practically he occupies that place, and he is feared, praised, thanked, glorified, as much as ever was ancient deity. And if the worship be the same as of old, then its issue must remain the same. As certainly as it produced phlegm, servility and hebetude then, it will produce phlegm, servility and hebetude now; as certainly it will kill reason, originality, and all the practical virtues.

That the great god Bismarck should have his psalter like any other divinity is but fair and just, and the compiler of this work has been found in the person of a certain F. Sailer, who evidently pants to play a part in the noble hierarchy of which Moritz Busch is High Priest. That worthy, of course, none can reach or overtake, but F. Sailer in an Anthology, he has made from the written and spoken utterances of the Iron Prince, has run the arch-priest of servility very close indeed. The book is a truly remarkable one, not only, and by no means entirely, for the light it throws upon Prince Bismarck's personality, who, after all, with his brutal frankness of speech, has never hidden his light under a bushel, but for the indirect insight it gives us into the state of mind of

the German people who hang upon the Chancellor's word like to the utterances of an inspired being.

Hero-worship, or its counterfeit, is the fashion, even in our own country. England has broken out, of late years, into birthday books of all kinds: Tennyson birthday books, Shakespeare birthday books, George Eliot birthday books, and who not else. But these are nothing to the effusion before us. These are cold enough to choose only the most memorable saws of their great men; but our author has a warmer heart or a truer faith. Careless whether his choice will seem good, bad, or indifferent to the ungodly, he ardently seizes the whole lump of princely ideas and inserts them wholesale. We who have not his inspiring enthusiasm, but bring cold analytic common-sense to bear instead, are tempted to call distinctly trite remarks, such as: "For work, we must have nerves," or, "It is natural to wish to be near those we love when they are in pain, and to mourn in company with them." But we must not forget that we are not among the elect, and to outsiders much looks trite that to the initiated contains wisdom the most precious, subtleties the most rare. Then, too, the ordinary Teutonic mind is not so jejune and common-place as ours. It delights in trite sayings, and platitudes when spoken by a prince are apt to be held as miracles, and when spoken, moreover, by Prince Bismarck as but another flower to be planted in an Anthology.

F. Sailer's Anthology is prefaced by a few words from himself; words that might almost have been written by the great Busch. "This work," says his rival, "has a double aim. To every one who has a share in the life and growth of the German people, especially then to every voter, it would fain be a hand-book which teaches him in systematic and chronological order, all about the views on whose basis Prince Bismarck—more blessed than any statesman before him—has promoted the good of our fatherland, from the beginning of his political activity, down to the present day."

But not the less does this Anthology desire to be a household treasure to every German family, in order that these may rejoice in the wealth of intellectual sayings with which our great contemporary has so over-richly gifted the German nation that has been led by him to unity.

The work, as we have said, furnishes matter for much interesting study, food for much thought, for it is needless to say that all Prince Bismarck's utterances are not so feeble and trite as those we quoted above. It is rather his over-ardent Boswell that is at fault when such base metal is served up to us as gold. Reticence, we all know, is not Prince Bismarck's little weakness, and he does not hold with Talleyrand that language was made to conceal thought. He does not even carry his reticence or courtesy to the usual diplomatic bounds. Indeed of courtesy he has little idea and no opinion. We know that Carlyle, to whom he must have been

a man after his own heart, strong, remorseless, relentless, regardless, a worshipper of brute force and the oppression of the weak, had but one fault to find with the prince, and that was that he cannot hold his tongue. Now we know that Carlyle himself fell into this error, and that though he worshipped the Silences, he could not maintain them himself, and much the same is the case with Prince Bismarck. He hates Parliaments, for example, because he regards them as mere institutions for national palaver, and palaver is waste of time in his eyes, when it is not he who is the speaker. In that case, of course, it is not palaver but wisdom, and from these pages of spoken and written wisdom F. Sailer has culled many a flower and many a cankered blossom.

The book is compiled in a thoroughly German exact and business-like fashion. The sayings of F. Sailer's idol are divided and sub-divided under various headings. Thus we have the prince's remarks on the State, the Germans, on Prussia, on taxation, on oratory, on the army, on officials, on royal faith, on the Chancellor's position, on parliament, on Liberalism, on the Poles, on France (and bitter enough are some of these), on England, peace, war, victory and what not else. The gospel according to Bismarck is written here with words of unmistakable clearness. That the Chancellor has never hesitated to contradict himself whenever he held it needful or expedient, we all know, and he defends this attitude in his usual cynical, frank fashion. Indeed his belief in himself and his heaven-sent mission is little less strong than that of his followers, and he is therefore indifferent as to whom he rides over roughshod, or what impertinent utterances he flings into the face of astonished and more courteous Europe. We must therefore be neither surprised nor shocked when we find in these pages self-evident fallacies put down as incontrovertible truths, or doubtful statements left unsupported, for no better reason than that the Chancellor himself has uttered them. It is evident that he neither expects nor will brook dissent from the slight reasons he gives for asserting very large facts indeed. For example, we must it seems at once banish from our minds the many things that great men and profound thinkers have uttered against existing social institutions in Germany if we are to believe with the prince that "the German of his very nature has a strong tendency to discontent," and this therefore accounts for all socialistic and other insurrectionary fevers in their body politic, and need therefore be regarded with no soberness, but as innate humours of the frame.

Often prolix, after the fashion of his countrymen, Bismarck can also be most epigrammatic when he likes. See how neatly and briefly he has expressed the reason of the imprisonments, banishments, restrictions of the press, into which his kind heart has been forced. Why do not other nations follow his example? It is far shorter and easier to say that our civil war arose from the national

inclination to discontent, than from tyranny and encroachment upon popular rights. Happy thought! Perhaps the French Revolution, the present condition of Russia, and many similar things may all be traced in their origin to such ethnographical peculiarities. Prince Bismarck, we thank thee for that phrase. It will spare great efforts from being made. For instance, we need no longer worry ourselves as to the best way to better the condition of the poor, to control avarice, to mitigate the evils of competition. The complaints that have falsely stirred our compassion arose but from a national instinct for discontent; the people's grievances are the forgeries of their own peevish natures. We suppose it is on the assumption that all outbreaks in Germany are due to this national faculty for discontent, which he, Prince Bismarck, has power to overrule, that we owe the dictum: "From Germany we need fear no disturbance of European peace." Perhaps not while his iron hand holds the reins, but the Chancellor's posterity, if not himself, may have to learn that the expression of repressed energy is not simply the sign of a grumbling nature, and that, one day, that energy may make itself way with a noise which will echo through Europe. Has not Heine, that acute observer, with his true knowledge of Germany, foretold that when the German revolution comes it will be of a fierceness and fervour that will throw even the French into the shade. But meanwhile Bismarck acts and speaks as though he would never die, as though Germany would be in his leading strings for ever.

Of theories, of acting from motives of conscience, Bismarck has no opinion. Indeed he holds that a statesman has no business to indulge in such a luxury as a conscience. "Theories," he says "are even of less value in statesmanship than in ordinary life." Here is one of the brutally frank confessions he loves to indulge in at times, probably laughing in his sleeve at his listeners as he doles them out. "I have verified on myself," he says, "that we have not the same ideas in politics when we occupy ourselves with them, as idle dilettanti in the moments of leisure left to us by another profession, and when we are free from the sense of responsibility, as when we are in a position in which we have to render account of every act." On the other hand he is never weary of protesting his absolute indifference to public opinion. "I have very little need for gratitude," he says, "and I am indifferent to criticism." And again he asserts that he felt happier and more at his ease when he was young and the object of general antipathy, than in the days when he was most popular. "During all the course of my political life," he says in 1874, "I have had the honour to have many enemies. Go from the Garonne (to begin with Gascony) to the Vistula, from the Belt to the Tiber, search along our German streams, on the banks of the Oder or the Rhine, and you will see that I am the most hated man in all the world, and (I say it with pride) the best hated." Indeed he flaunts this hatred of



himself of which he is right in saying that he is proud. He cares not for men's love, it is their fear he wants. Again, elsewhere, he reiterates the same note. "As for me, I shall follow to the end, and without vacillating, the direct road on which I have entered for the sake of my country. If, in its course, I meet with hate or love, that is absolutely the same to me."

In equally sweeping and absolute fashion he deals with the question of free-trade *versus* protection. That he has a mighty contempt for his Parliament, that he thinks it needless to explain to them his reasons for his actions, we all know; but it is impressive to read collected together his utterances on the question of levying duties upon corn, tobacco, beer and wine, the utmost he condescends to say resolving itself chiefly into that he so wills it. "I do not deny," he says, "and do not deem it superfluous to acknowledge, that I am strongly in favour of the monopoly of tobacco." The corn-laws he justifies by the promise that bread will not go up in consequence, but much as even the Germans reverence his omnipotent word, they must surely, some of them at least, find it a little hard to believe that it is even capable of controlling the laws of nature. "We have very often," he says, "had it (the price of corn), just as high again as now, without our bread getting any dearer," and as a further extenuation he adds: "In the country we now find ourselves in this position, that the millers who rent our mills no longer buy their rye from us, but since, generally speaking, they are also bakers, sell to us who live in the country, bread baked of Russian rye. I myself eat Russian bread though I live at Friedrichsruhe." But surely to any mind trained to think for itself and not through a blind belief in Bismarck's utterances, this statement does not prove that the protection system can cure the evils of which he complains or that it has ever done so. The assertion of a fact is not its proof.

As for free-trade, he sweeps it away in a manner still more conclusive than that in which he establishes protection: "I am not of opinion," he declares, "that the *laissez faire, laissez aller*, the pure 'Manchesterdom' in politics"—"Let every man take care of himself," "Whosoever is not strong enough to stand will be run down and trodden to the ground," "To him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken"—can find application in the State, above all in a monarchical, patriarchal State." Strange that with all its "Manchesterdom," and tyrannous Stuart Mills and Brights, England should so have flourished in her commerce! True, protection is beautifully dressed up here into a tender desire to guard the weak and keep the poor from being trampled on, but if we care to seek the truth ourselves, we shall hardly find that "Manchesterdom" has been the oppressive policy; the tyranny has rather lain in that system which raises the prices of food and narrows a nation's opportunities.

Nor are these the only great and present truths we find dismissed in a few authoritative phrases. Socialism, Bismarck tells us, is against the good of the working classes, but omits to show us how: the system of unions is pernicious, but he gives no weighty arguments to uphold the condemnation. Perhaps if he had encouraged trades unions, the spectres of social insurrection would not look so red. But then he does not like to import innovations from abroad: "Comparisons with foreign countries are always objectionable," he thinks, and he is certain, too, that "the natural spirit of Prussia is monarchical . . . and happily the grateful are in the majority."

What he means by monarchical he was so good lately as to explain to us in some detail, but lest our readers should have forgotten the incident, we reproduce his words:

"I recognize as monarchical," he said, "a constitution where, as with us, the Royal assent is necessary for passing laws, where the king has a veto and the Parliament also. Parliament has a right to reject bills which it considers pernicious or frivolous; but the monarchical institution ceases to deserve the name when the monarch may be forced by a Parliamentary majority to dismiss his ministers, to consent to measures which he would not sign voluntarily, against which his veto is therefore powerless." From which it follows that Germany possesses a monarchy but England does not. Prince Bismarck's arbitrary use of language has never before been stretched to quite such limits as on this occasion. Etymologically, monarchy is, of course, the government of a single person, and only autocrats have a right to the name, and constitutional monarchy is as much a contradiction in terms as merry sadness.

That, when he chooses, Bismarck can call a spade a spade, and in the coarsest language too, Herr Busch has been careful to impress upon the whole of Europe. But when it pleases him he can also present his facts in guise attraction. He is the very apostle of expediency, and persuades himself, or feigns to persuade himself, into believing all that he holds momentarily necessary. He is perhaps never more antipathetic than when he uses his peculiar form of Christianity, a *mélange* of old Hebrew vindictiveness with Pagan worship of dread, as an instrument of suasion, wherewith to enforce his arguments. Bismarck posing as a believer reminds us too forcibly of the old doggerel about the devil when he was sick. Considering that Bismarck's sovereign, an aged man never great of intellect, is as mere potter's clay to this iron will, does not the following sentence strike as nauseous in its transparent servility: "For me," says the prince "the words, 'By God's grace,' which Christian rulers add to their names, are no empty sound; rather do I see therein the recognition that princes wish to use the sceptre which God has lent them according to God's will on earth." Sometimes, indeed, he becomes so ardently pious

and philanthropic, that we cannot help a conviction of his own faith in what he says: "I must beg you to accept the fact, that every one strives for that degree of freedom for the people which he deems compatible with the good of the father-land;" he says in one place; and in another: "It is very useful if there is a member of the Ministry, who, in his private relations, knows what it is to be ruled." How would he like to be snubbed, silenced, sent away in disgrace, as he snubs, silences, and sends away the German Parliament? How would he like to have his writings suppressed, and his life made heavy with objectionable taxes? This we do not learn; but we know what he says when the German press, taunted and goaded beyond endurance, for once speaks out: "These simpleton geese of the German press do not perceive that they are working against their own best interests when they attack *me*."

Again and again he openly avows his contempt for all progress, his disbelief in all noble ideals, all disinterested patriotism.

There is something in the tone of his utterances that "gives on the nerves," and puts those who by nature are not in sympathy with this man of blood and iron, hopelessly in opposition to him. One may admire his strength, resolution, astuteness and vigour; but one admires them as one admires a wild beast in a cage, glad to think that iron bars separate us from the monster. At best it is but a sorry and gloomy creed that at the close of its career declares that: "We can neither ignore the history of the past nor make the future." Would, for the sake of Germany, one could believe the latter proposition true, but we fear Bismarck has made for it a future, and a black one, for a little time, there is every cause to think it will be when once his iron hand is removed, relaxed by the yet sterner decree of Death, the only conqueror of the indomitable.

Studying this anthology, it is borne in upon us that it is not merely in the domain of political economy that Bismarck makes unsupported statements, or is unwilling to expound his views, a thing he evidently thinks too great a condescension and waste of time for him to bestow upon a world of dolts. He does the same in other departments where his opinions are quite unsolicited. Thus, for example, speaking of eloquence and oratory in general, he remarks that, "a man of cool reflection, and sure, accurate, calculating measurement, to whom one willingly confides the conduct of great important affairs, can never be an excellent orator." With all respect both to the Minister and his satellite, Mr. F. Sailer, this flies slightly in the face of fact. Looking only homewards, we find Pitt, Disraeli, and Gladstone, who prove the contrary of this saying, since they had both the capabilities of leadership and of oratory.

That he has a low opinion of the press, that if he could abolish it altogether, or at least the unofficial portion, he would gladly do

so, we all know, and the Anthology abounds in his snorts of contempt: "It is only gradually that we are losing our respect for that which is printed, and this only since 1848; before that the greater part of the population held everything that was printed as of special significance. Every one in the country who could read the official papers, not to speak of the Bible and hymn book, thought what was printed was true, regardless of the current saying, 'he tells lies like print,' a saying we may learn to modify into 'he lies like a telegram,' if the current fashion continues of misusing this means of transmission." Here is a criticism we little looked to see passed upon the cumbrous German press, which is nothing if not instructive and thorough: "The German public is not capable of reading solid and instructive articles upon our affairs. The readers do not love what costs labour and fatigue, and the editors of newspapers love it still less. Our public demands journals that furnish them with political and amusing chit-chat, written between one glass of beer and another." Again, addressing Parliament, the prince said: "The capacity of reading is much more diffused among us than in France and England; the capacity of judging practically that which has been read is less with us than in these two countries."

Here is an axiom the force of which our late disasters will bring yet more closely home to us. It contains in a nutshell the reason of Prince Bismarck's great success in the life scheme he formulated for himself and for his country. "What wrecks governments is to do now this, now that; to promise one thing to-day and to refuse it to-morrow. A government must have no indecisions. When it has once chosen its road, it is needful that it walk straight on, looking neither to right nor left. If it vacillates it becomes weak, and the whole State suffers."

With a last characteristic utterance from the mouth of the iron Chancellor, we close this rapid survey of an Anthology of his "winged words": "A brave horse dies in harness. I have formerly declared frankly my intention of retiring, because I no longer felt myself physically capable of actively continuing to fight my cause, and because I did not find among my colleagues the support I needed. I therefore think it well to declare that I have come round from this foolish notion; it does not occur to me to retire. *J'y suis, j'y reste.*"

Thus Germany as well as all Europe is well warned and thoroughly informed. That Bismarck is satisfied with himself, that he thoroughly believes in himself and in the wisdom of no other person, that too is made clearly manifest in this Anthology which shows him in all his force. It would be hard, however, for any but a German, born, bred and nurtured in the cult of the one and only true Bismarck, to regard its hero as amiable, lovable or high-principled, after the light thrown upon him by means of his own words.

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"In vain did Mrs. Guildford look unutterable things on the few occasions that she succeeded in catching her daughter's eye; Marjorie was enjoying herself, and meant to do so till the end of the evening."  
[See "ON THE BRINK,"